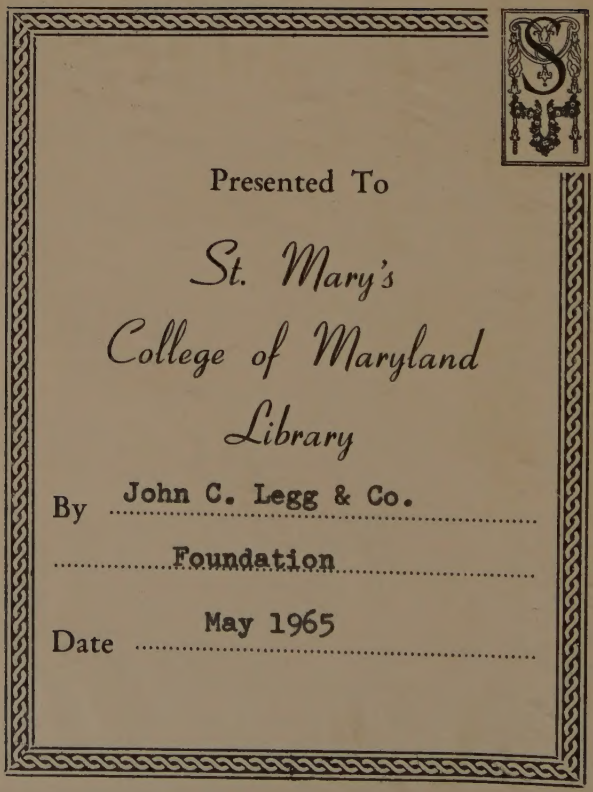
ABRAHAM LINCOLN TRAVELED THIS WAY

FRED L. HOLMES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THE LOG BOOK OF A PILGRIM TO THE LINCOLN COUNTRY

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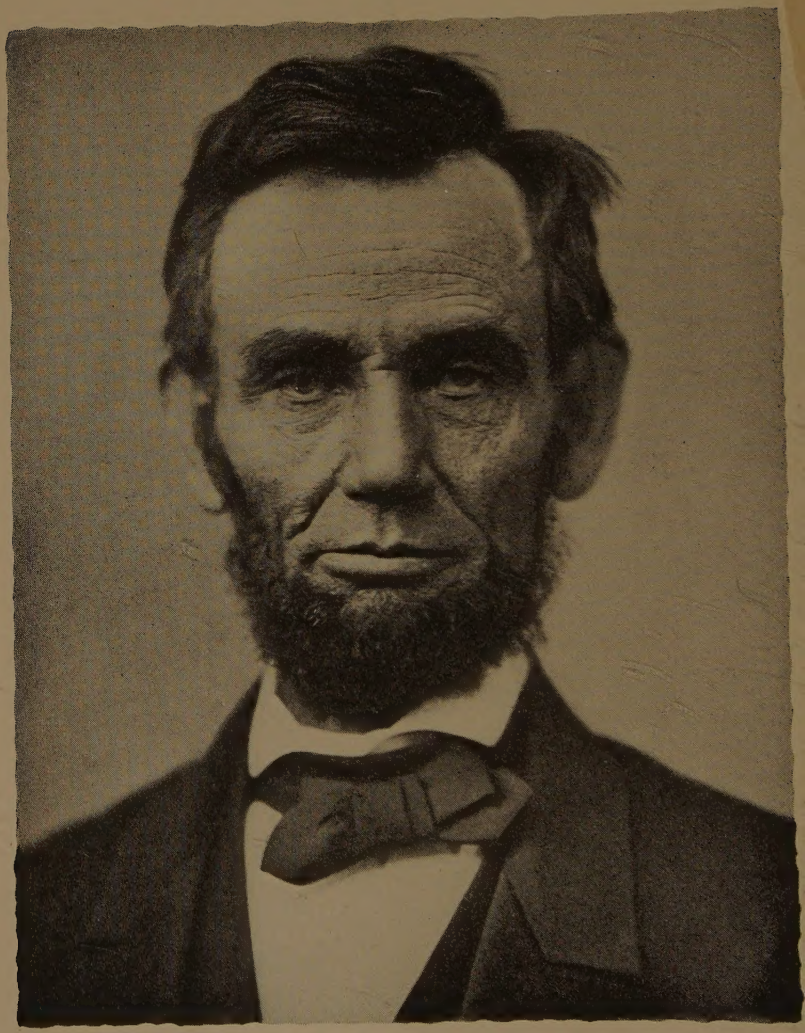

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN TRAVELED THIS WAY

THE LOG BOOK OF A PILGRIM TO THE LINCOLN COUNTRY

BY FRED L. HOLMES

Foreword by
GLENN FRANK
President of the University of Wisconsin

With map and thirty-two plates from original photographs

L. C. PAGE & COMPANY

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TO

HELEN DOROTHY HOLMES

MY WIFE

WHOSE HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

SUSTAINED ME IN WRITING

WHEN DISCOURAGEMENTS

MULTIPLIED

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

SOME time ago I was asked by the editor of a magazine to visit Abraham Lincoln's young manhood home near Petersburg, Illinois, to gather fresh material for an article. What I saw and learned on that pilgrimage shattered many notions formulated from years of reading conventional biographies. Perhaps it was the observations of Thomas P. Reep, Petersburg, Illinois, a profound lawyer-student of Lincoln's early life, that gave me a broader vision. Here around Old Salem was Lincoln, still living by tradition in the families he knew. Here were his haunts, here the scenes of inspiration. Here was a reality, not a copper-plate picture. Out of the mists and halo appeared a real Lincoln, good-natured, practical, shrewd—a man among men, not a superman nor a deity.

Then for two years I spent my vacations driving a little roadster, which I called "The Pilgrim," making a series of pilgrimages to every place made memorable by some event associated with Mr. Lincoln's life. Many a fable vanished when the actual facts became apparent. Long before these visits were ended, my conception of Mr. Lincoln had been so altered, his ways had become so intimate, his haunts so inviting that I hesitatingly tried to phrase the feeling one experiences and the things one sees in traveling along Lincoln's historic way. This volume, with its present-day pictures, is the unpretending product of these excursions.

My companions on these tours have been more than passengers. By discerning questions and keen observations they have lessened my labors and turned tasks into holidays. Mr. Louis W. Bridgman, Educational Director of the State Board of Health of Wisconsin, was with me on a trip into Illinois; Lieutenant Governor Henry A. Huber of Wisconsin accompanied me on a delightful outing to Kentucky and Indiana; and Mr. Frank W. Kuehl, Assistant Attorney General of Wisconsin, visited with me the Lincoln scenes in the East.

While not intended as a biography, the story of these pilgrimages includes the presentation of the more controlling life factors. Citations of easily accessible books and authorities have been made in many instances to aid the reader who desires to travel further with Abraham Lincoln in chosen fields.

To those who have so generously given time and advice to this undertaking in travel biography, I acknowledge my profound indebtedness. Especially do I desire to thank Mr. Bridgman and Mr. Albert O. Barton for painstaking editorship; Justice Charles H. Crownhart of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, a lawyer after Lincoln's heart, for suggestions; and Mr. George P. Hambrecht, an acknowledged Lincoln scholar, for help and encouragement. Valuable data of a varied nature have been obtained and furnished by the staffs of the State Historical Societies of Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. Local Lincoln followers, authorities on events touching his life within restricted territory, have directed me into many unexplored fields. Mr. H. W. Fay, custodian of the Lincoln Tomb and Museum at Springfield, Illinois, has courteously advised

with me and furnished me with several rare pictures. Miss Grace C. Lynch, Washington, D. C., has been indefatigable in her efforts to garner desirable information from the Congressional Library. To these and many others, interviewed along the romantic route, whose names I cannot enroll because of space limitations, acknowledgments are due.

It has been my hopeful ambition to give to the public the Lincoln I met on these pilgrimages. He was a plain man, courageous, truthful, hard working; an able country lawyer, a keen political observer, a good citizen, but above all a man who unfalteringly charted his course on biblical precepts of honesty and right doing. There are scores of men in private and public life today who possess many of his characteristics. Perhaps no one exhibits them all. In the practice of his ideals lies the hope of America.

If those who read these pages are brought nearer to the homely principles followed by this great leader of common humanity, I shall feel well repaid for my humble efforts. If they will take but one journey to any of the Lincoln haunts, the new conception of Americanism they will carry away will not dim in a lifetime.

FRED L. HOLMES

MADISON, WISCONSIN

FOREWORD

I HAVE long been a worshiper at the shrine of Abraham Lincoln. I have tried, however, to keep myself free from the fertile illusions and fanciful legends that swarm about the memory of authentic greatness. I have been a sedulous reader of the Lincoln literature just because I prefer even clay feet to unreality in the dead great, to whose memories we repair for renewed confidence in the possibilities of the human spirit.

I am, I confess, a bit suspicious of a new book on Lincoln. It is no easy matter to invade a field as fully plowed as the life of Lincoln has been plowed, alike by ruthless investigators and by romantic idolaters, if one expects to turn up anything new, or enough that is new, to justify a new book.

And yet, despite this handicap, serious enough to dampen the ardor of even the most devoted Lincolnian, and without pretense of presenting a sober monograph on newly discovered Lincolniana, Mr. Holmes has produced a volume that is at once unique and useful.

This is not a biography. This is not a guide-book. This is not a travel book. By simple and yet subtle craftsmanship, Mr. Holmes has made it all three of these in one. In the hours he has been able to steal from a busy life as a journalist, Mr. Holmes has had three hobbies. He has been a student of Lincolniana, an amateur photographer, and a motorist, three hobbies

that have flowered in this volume. Vacation time has found him, not on Wisconsin trout streams or at European watering places, but, equipped with camera and car, following the trail of Lincoln from the poverty of his birth to the power of his maturity and the tragedy of his death. His approach to Lincoln has been neither academic nor uncritical. He knows the musty documents over which lovers of Lincoln pore. But to his knowledge of these, he has added the piquant and colorful material from casual conversations with common folk who knew Lincoln and were themselves of the soil out of which Lincoln sprang. On repeated pilgrimages to the places Lincoln lived in and loved, Lincoln has come to life for Mr. Holmes, and has become, for him, not a dim figure in a text-book, but a living source of spiritual nutriment. He transfers this quality of aliveness to his book.

I have enjoyed reading this book as I enjoy reading a good travel book. The countryside and its citizens come alive, as Mr. Holmes travels along the Lincoln trails and tells with picture and pen what he sees. When next I motor in these regions, I shall want this book with me as a kind of Baedeker to the Land of Lincolniana. And I shall want my son with me on the trip. If I can get him to read this book as he rides along the Lincoln trails, I am sure it will not be the last book about Lincoln he will read, or the last time he will ponder the germinal spirit of Lincoln, which has so much to say to young Americans.

Happily, the guide-book and travel book aspects of this volume follow the life of Lincoln chronologically after the manner of a biography. Mr. Holmes might have written a conventional guide-book to the Lincoln

shrines and the collections of Lincolniana, but the technical device of fitting all his materials into a biographical frame has invested with a flavor of life and reality facts and scenes that might otherwise lie dead in a guide-book or picture collection.

And the approach to the character of Lincoln, which this book reveals, is in keeping with the best tradition of biographical study. Fashions in biography change. There is a kind of biographer whose chief business is the manufacture of halos. There is another kind of biographer whose chief delight is tarnishing halos. The first invariably gives us a picture of a "great" man deliberately designed to evoke revulsion. Neither produces good biography. The sound biographer is neither a booster blind to everything save virtues nor a buzzard on the fly for decayed matter. The sound biographer is not out to deify or to damn, but to discover the real man back of the mask that propagandists or idolaters may have fashioned. Mr. Holmes displays an admirable sense of reality. But his sense of reality has not dulled the edge of his appreciation of authentic greatness.

Any book that brings to life the character of the nation's dead great as effectively as this book brings Lincoln to life is a fruitful enterprise. All truth—whether it be the truth of religion or the truth of politics—reaches its greatest power when it is incarnated in a great personality. This is why the greatest leaders of religion and of politics have usually said "Follow me" rather than "Work on this program."

I commend this book to a nation of motorists, for it will put meaning into what otherwise might be a mere trip. Instead of touring some geographical state or

province, we might well set aside a vacation time to tour the Land of Lincolniana under Mr. Holmes's intelligent direction.

GLENN FRANK

MADISON, WISCONSIN

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CHAPTER I

A LOG CABIN ENSHRINED

THE Dixie Highway, black and smooth as a satin ribbon, running southwest out of Louisville, leads to the heart of the Lincoln country in Kentucky. A connecting road to Hodgenville, the birthplace shrine, and a return over the Jackson route complete a tour of one of America's most historic circuits. The way is so full of delicious surprises that only a loiterer can garner the immortal story which hill and valley offer. Within a circumference of one hundred and twenty-five miles every scene memorable in the early life of Abraham Lincoln may be visited, with added stops, like footnotes in a book; to Elizabethtown where John Audubon, the famous naturalist, kept store; to Muldraugh's Hill where Jesse James, the notorious outlaw, held rendezvous; to little Bardstown, "The Rome of the West," with its cathedral sheltering paintings of the great masters; to the grave of John Fitch, who claimed the honor of inventing the steamboat; to the cool, inviting plantation house on Federal Hill, where Stephen C. Foster penned the deathless stanzas of "Old Black Joe" and "My Old Kentucky Home." The circling pathway already well beaten has a mysterious glamor.

Each hour unfolds its own glorious drama. The trip may be made in a single day. I took two. I lingered over the Lincoln spots, attempting to fathom in sunlight and shadow Lincoln's peculiar characteristics of

untamed freedom and loneliness which appear to harmonize with the landscape and scenery, at times sullen in barrenness or again brooding in the quiet of its richly wooded hillsides. Delay seemed to sweep away the life that came between.

I had arranged this visit in October, when the trees and shrubs would be dressed in their autumn hues. Nor was I disappointed. Never was coloring more riotous or brilliant. The little roadster, which I came to call "The Pilgrim" because of its unfaltering faithfulness in every pinch of highway circumstance, took me into Dixie as it was to carry me everywhere on these Lincoln rambles. No road could be too miry; no pathway too tangled or obscure for it to follow. When the way was open and free, the little car seemed like an animal sensing a delight in going. There is pleasure in such a trip that knows neither time nor worry of destination.

It was to visit Elizabethtown, the first home of Lincoln's parents, that I came down the Dixie Highway. Before his marriage, Thomas Lincoln, the father of the President, had owned a farm where he had lived from 1803 to 1805 near Mill Creek, twelve miles north on the old Shepherdsville road, and it was during his bachelorhood residence that he had signed a petition with others for the establishment of this highway.[1] For more than a century this was known as a part of the Louisville-Nashville turnpike, until absorbed into the federal system as a segment of the Dixie route which carries so many tourists to or from the Southland.

Riding over this stretch, I could not help feeling that even in these early days Thomas Lincoln must have

[1] Warren, Louis A., *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood*, p. 49.

been a man of affairs. Court records recently discovered disclose that he played a prominent part in the new settlement. He retained the Mill Creek farm until 1814, two years before his family moved to Indiana, but he never lived on it after his marriage to Nancy Hanks at Beechwood, in Washington county, June 12, 1806.[1] Elizabethtown became the Lincoln home after the wedding. Here they began housekeeping.

One experiences an exhilaration upon nearing the places that have been woven into the fabric of the life story of Abraham Lincoln. The frontier hamlet of more than one hundred years ago has grown to a city of nearly 3,000 population, but the old, red brick Hardin county court house in a crowded plot remains the center of greatest interest. It contains many records of the Lincoln family.[2] I stopped at the square to read a tablet:

THOMAS LINCOLN AND NANCY HANKS LINCOLN

THE PARENTS OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

LIVED IN ELIZABETHTOWN FROM THE TIME OF THEIR MARRIAGE, JUNE 12, 1806, UNTIL THEIR REMOVAL, IN THE FALL OF 1808, TO THE FARM NEAR HODGENVILLE WHERE ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS BORN. SARAH, THEIR FIRST CHILD, WAS BORN HERE.

A YEAR AFTER THE DEATH OF NANCY HANKS LINCOLN IN INDIANA, THOMAS LINCOLN RETURNED AND ON DECEMBER 2, 1819, MARRIED HERE MRS. SALLY BUSH JOHNSTON, A RESIDENT OF ELIZABETHTOWN, WHO BECAME THE BELOVED FOSTER MOTHER OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"Where did the parents of Abraham Lincoln live while residents here?" I inquired of the hotel proprietor who had been courteous in explaining the in-

[1] Record of marriage on file in clerk's office, Springfield, Washington county, Kentucky.

[2] Elizabethtown is the county seat of Hardin County. In 1843 Larue county was created from a part of it, with Hodgenville as the county seat.

creasing public interest in Lincoln sites and landmarks.

"That is a subject of a great deal of dispute," he responded. "The garage near the square where you stored your car was once the site of the home of Sarah Bush Johnston, who married Lincoln's father, after the death of Lincoln's mother in Indiana in 1818.

"The Lincolns lived in Elizabethtown about two years after their marriage in 1806. The father was a carpenter and at one time was engaged to construct a saw mill here for Denton Geoghegan. There are a number of houses in the city which were built by Thomas Lincoln and have since been remodeled. He seems to have been an industrious citizen.

"Among the old residents, there has always been a well defined tradition that Lincoln's father built his own home at the outskirts of the town, near the Dixie Highway bridge over Middle Creek, close to the Louisville and Nashville railroad station. Samuel Haycraft, a local historian, claimed that the house was standing in 1869. It has since been razed." [1]

A brief trip to the age-toned court house and I was soon on my way, to halt only a moment at the poplar tree that stands sentinel on the site of the home of Thomas Lincoln near the railroad station. Two miles out of Elizabethtown, a road to the left off the Dixie Highway leads direct to Hodgenville and the birthplace shrine of Abraham Lincoln. The drive requires a half hour.

Before going to the birthplace, I must confess making a visit to still another home of Thomas Lincoln,

[1] Haycraft, Samuel, *History of Elizabethtown,* p. 74. Louis A. Warren in a tourist's booklet, *Louisville Lincoln Loop,* says, "An old poplar tree stands near the immediate site," and locates the place as 300 feet north of the Dixie Highway bridge near Middle Creek. p. 38.

which as yet does not seem to be well authenticated by historical records. Somehow I wish it were. I rather like the sentimental setting of the scene. It is five miles south of Hodgenville, with the shrine midway between.

It is because authorities are in disagreement—and I had not the ingenuity to settle their disputes—that I went there anyway. Louis A. Warren[1] produces strong evidence to prove that Mr. Lincoln's parents did not remove from Elizabethtown to their Nolin Creek home, south of Hodgenville, until the fall of 1808, a few months before the birth of their immortal son. William E. Barton, basing his conclusions on facts gathered by the attorney for the Lincoln Farm Association, believes that Thomas and Nancy Lincoln left Elizabethtown in the spring or early summer of 1808 and lived as tenants on the farm of George Brownfield, near Buffalo, where Thomas worked a few months as carpenter and farm laborer for the landlord.[2] Late in the fall or early winter they moved to their new farm home on Nolin Creek, near Rock Spring, where on February 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln was born.[3]

By the people of the countryside around Hodgenville the Brownfield farm is pointed out for its "plum orchard" where the Lincoln tenant cabin is said to have stood. It is still a scene of wild crab-apple trees, a place of great fragrance in early spring. No longer

[1] Warren, *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood,* pp. 52-55; Tarbell, *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns,* p. 91.

[2] Barton, William E., *Paternity of Abraham Lincoln,* pp. 69-70; R. W. Creal, former county judge of Larue county in a letter to the author, Nov. 15, 1928, gives verification of the story. He was born on the farm in 1854 and his father often pointed out Lincoln's home in the creek bottom where there was a plum thicket. Farm now owned by J. A. Howard, whose house is near the log cabin site.

[3] Rock Spring Farm, where Abraham Lincoln was born, was purchased by Thomas Lincoln, Dec. 12, 1808.

stands the cabin. No marking of path to a doorway is traceable. Silence is the only speech there. Viewed in the autumn the place is drab and colorless. But I like to believe that maybe in this little orchard, suffused with its perfumed apple breezes of spring, musical with song of birds, nature whispered to Nancy Hanks her promise that a son was to be born into the world. And she was happy!

It became necessary to put an end to my dreaming and hasten my wanderings unless I wished to prolong my days of pilgrimage. Instead of a dull, uninteresting country around Hodgenville, as I expected, it is a land of changeful scenery. Valleys and rolling landscapes gratify the eye with vistas of pastoral beauty. I have rarely traveled two miles with keener anticipation than in the trip over the Jackson Highway to the birthplace.

There were moments of trepidation. Would the housing of the humble cabin in a Greek temple on the hill, over the site where it had stood out in the farming country away from the city, dissipate the love for tradition which I had come to associate with the spot? It was my first visit and I longed to have it impressive.

Soon I was at the gates. The road was winding into a little valley and then, from behind the trees, loomed in an afternoon sun the rectangular, granite edifice on a knoll with its long, glistening stone steps fringed with green hedges. At once there came upon me a sense of thankfulness that a patriotic people, under the inspiration of the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Richard Lloyd Jones and Robert J. Collier, had voluntarily contributed their $385,000 to a fund to reclaim these hallowed grounds,—"the most signal tribute ever paid

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BIRTHPLACE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

by the American people to the Nation's greatest servant."

From the base of the ascent the memorial is a picture of grace and harmony. It stands out alone against the sky above a wide expanse of country. Approaching the Doric-columned entrance, one discerns the bold, chiseled inscription:

HERE
OVER THE LOG CABIN WHERE ABRAHAM
LINCOLN WAS BORN DESTINED TO
PRESERVE THE UNION AND FREE THE
SLAVE
A GRATEFUL PEOPLE HAVE DEDICATED
THIS MEMORIAL TO UNITY, PEACE
AND BROTHERHOOD AMONG THE STATES

About to enter, I read other inscriptions beside the doorway, selected from his memorable speech at Peoria, his address at Cooper Union, and his Second Inaugural. The spirit of his ideals sentineled the threshhold.

The log cabin was now within view and I forgot all else. How humble it seemed; how narrow the doorway; how little the one window near the fireplace; how out of proportion the chimney! There is only one room. It is pitifully small. It measures seventeen feet by twelve, and the whole is constructed of one hundred and forty-three logs.

"And is this really the cabin in which Abraham Lincoln was born on Sunday, February 12, 1809?" I asked. It was the same question that confronts nearly every visitor.

"The history of the building is well authenticated," responded Mr. J. M. Cissel, the caretaker. "It has

had a career of many vicissitudes, but it now rests upon the spot where it stood in 1809. After the close of the Civil War it was purchased by George Rodman, whose parents were neighbors of the Lincolns. It was moved several times and used as a school, tenant house and negro quarters. In 1894 it was acquired by A. W. Dennett and shortly thereafter began an exhibition journey to the Nashville Centennial, to Central Park in New York, and to the Buffalo Exposition. The logs were found stored in a basement in New York and were purchased by the Lincoln Farm Association in 1906 and finally returned to this birthplace site,[1] after this memorial had been completed.

"Three presidents have since visited here. The cornerstone was laid by President Roosevelt, February 12, 1909; President Taft attended the dedication, November 9, 1911; and President Wilson accepted the farm as a National Park, September 4, 1916. Thousands of people from all over the world now visit here annually."

"Does the government own the entire original farm of Thomas Lincoln?" I asked.

"Only about a third," he responded. "There are about 100 acres in this National Park. Recent investigations disclose that the farm comprised nearly 350 acres. A part of the land is across the road from the park premises."

I was loath to leave. Walking around the cabin, examining its cracks and crevices, its joints and ridge pole, and peering through the chained doorway at the

[1] For detailed story of the cabin and history of the activities of the Lincoln Farm Association, which secured its preservation: Warren, Louis A., *Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace,* (1927); also Warren, *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood,* pp. 75-93; Tarbell, *Ibid.,* 90-100.

hearth, I was touched with sadness in reflecting upon the obvious poverty of the first owners. It must have been so stinting in the little comforts it afforded.

When I lifted my eyes I found in a filtering light of mellow gold sunshine that the walls of the temple were blazoned with Lincoln tributes from poetry and history. One tablet contained an abbreviation of the autobiography prepared by Mr. Lincoln for Jesse W. Fell at Bloomington, Illinois, in 1859. It was a succinct recital of his life story, classic in its brevity and simplicity. He had been named Abraham, not for a neighbor as often supposed, but for his grandfather, a Kentucky pioneer, who was murdered by an Indian.[2]

The wording of two other tablets I copied, because they contained the salient facts of the much neglected lives of Lincoln's parents:

THOMAS LINCOLN

January 30, 1770 January 17, 1851

FIFTH IN DESCENT FROM SAMUEL LINCOLN, WEAVER, WHO LANDED AT HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS, MAY 26, 1637. ORPHANED AT SIX YEARS OF AGE BY AN INDIAN BULLET HE GREW UP HOMELESS IN THE WILD WOODS OF KENTUCKY. AT TWENTY-FIVE HE WAS THE POSSESSOR OF THIS CABIN HOME AND ITS NEIGHBORING ACRES. IN 1818 HE MOVED TO INDIANA, THEN A TERRITORY. FIVE YEARS LATER HE FOLLOWED THE TIDE OF IMMIGRATION TO ILLINOIS, WHERE HE LIVED A PEACEFUL, INDUSTRIOUS, RESPECTED CITIZEN, A GENERAL, HONEST AND CONTENTED PIONEER. WITH COURAGE AND ENERGY HE BUILT WITH HIS OWN HAND FIVE HOMES, EACH BETTER THAN THE PRECEDING ONE, HE WON AND HELD THE LOVE AND CONFIDENCE OF TWO NOBLE WOMEN, AND HE WAS THE FATHER OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN. "MY FATHER INSISTED THAT NONE OF HIS CHILDREN SHOULD SUFFER FOR THE WANT OF AN EDUCATION AS HE HAD." ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

[2] Warren, *Ibid.*, p. 106.

"HE WAS A GOOD CARPENTER FOR THE TIMES. HE HAD THE BEST SET OF TOOLS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY. THE LINCOLNS HAD A COW AND A CALF, MILK AND BUTTER, A GOOD FEATHER-BED, FOR I HAVE SLEPT ON IT, THEY HAD A HOME-WOVEN 'KIVERLID,' BIG AND LITTLE POTS, A LOOM AND WHEEL. TOM LINCOLN WAS A MAN AND TOOK CARE OF HIS WIFE. REVEREND JESSE HEAD, THE MINISTER WHO MARRIED TOM LINCOLN AND NANCY HANKS, TALKED BOLDLY AGAINST SLAVERY, AND TOM AND NANCY LINCOLN AND SARAH BUSH WERE JUST STEEPED FULL OF JESSE HEAD'S NOTIONS ABOUT THE WRONG OF SLAVERY AND THE RIGHTS OF MAN AS EXPLAINED BY THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THOMAS PAINE." PROF. T. C. GRAHAM, LOUISVILLE, KY.[1]

NANCY HANKS LINCOLN

February 4, 1774 — October 5, 1818

BORN IN VIRGINIA: WHEN THREE YEARS OLD HER PARENTS, JOSEPH AND NANCY SHIPLEY HANKS, CROSSED THE MOUNTAINS INTO KENTUCKY. ORPHANED AT NINE SHE WAS ADOPTED AND REARED BY RICHARD AND LUCY SHIPLEY BERRY, AT WHOSE HOME IN BEECHLAND, WASHINGTON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, SHE WAS MARRIED TO THOMAS LINCOLN, JUNE 17, 1806. OF THIS UNION WERE BORN SARAH, ABRAHAM AND THOMAS. THE FIRST MARRIED AARON GRIGSBY AND DIED IN INDIANA IN 1828. THE LAST DIED IN INFANCY. THE SECOND LIVED TO WRITE THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION. THE DAYS OF THE DISTAFF, THE SKILLET, THE DUTCH OVEN, THE OPEN FIREPLACE WITH ITS IRON CRANE ARE NO LONGER, BUT HOME MAKING IS STILL THE FINEST OF THE FINE ARTS. NANCY HANKS WAS TOUCHED WITH THE DIVINE APTITUDES OF THE FIRESIDE. LOVED AND HONORED FOR HER WIT, GENIALITY AND INTELLIGENCE, SHE JUSTIFIED AN ANCESTRY REACHING BEYOND THE SEAS, REPRESENTED BY THE NOTABLE NAMES OF HANKS, SHIPLEY, BOONE, EVANS AND MORRIS. TO HER WAS ENTRUSTED THE TASK OF TRAINING A GIANT IN WHOSE CHILDHOOD'S MEMORIES SHE WAS HALLOWED. OF HER HE SAID, "MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS OF MY MOTHER ARE OF SITTING AT HER FEET WITH MY SISTER DRINKING IN THE TALES AND LEGENDS THAT WERE READ AND RELATED TO US." TO HIM ON HER DEATHBED SHE SAID: "I AM GOING AWAY FROM YOU, ABRAHAM, AND I SHALL NOT RETURN, I KNOW YOU WILL BE A GOOD BOY,

[1] Recent investigations fix the birth of Thomas Lincoln as 1776, but it has been variously given in records as 1770, 1776 and 1780. The Lincoln family moved to Indiana in 1816, not 1818, and remained in Indiana fourteen years, not five years.

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ROCK CREEK SPRING

THAT YOU WILL BE KIND TO SARAH AND YOUR FATHER. I WANT YOU TO LIVE AS I HAVE TAUGHT YOU TO AND TO LOVE YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER." "ALL THAT I AM OR HOPE TO BE I OWE TO MY ANGEL MOTHER."

"Don't forget to visit the spring at the bottom of the steps on the right," admonished the caretaker, as I was leaving. "Little Abraham drank the water from there."

Down a flight of heavy steps, the spring is in a grotto-like cave high enough for one to stand while drinking. The air was cool. Green patches of moss and scraggling vines have attached themselves to the protruding sandstone and the whole is shaded with trees dense in their heavy foliage.

Spears of grass on the red clay bank above were withered by continued drouth. It is the most secluded spot on the farm, and its proximity to the cabin undoubtedly accounts for the immediate location of the cabin on the hillside. I drank of its crystalline waters.

Out in the sunlight again the caretaker called my attention to a giant oak but a few rods away.

"That tree is more than a century old," he explained. "Two of us joining hands can scarcely reach around it. I venture that on hot afternoons Lincoln's mother often brought her baby here to rest in its cooling shade."

"The tree is a landmark," interrupted another, who was listening. "For one hundred years it has been a marker in the making of surveys for this immediate locality."

I stood for a while in its shade. Its deep grooved bark is broken into irregular plates; its bushy head is impressive of its individuality and character. The

tree has poise and dignity comparable with its age. I felt certain that it had protected the baby Lincoln many warm days during his two years of residence there. Other trees on the farm are of more recent growth but here was one that had an acquaintance with him to whom the world pays reverence. To me it seemed both noble and human.

"I have had a good talk with one of Mr. Lincoln's more intimate childhood neighbors," I told my companion as we departed from the old monarch's shade. "Now we shall go back to Hodgenville and then visit Knob Creek, the second farm where Abraham Lincoln lived before the family moved from Kentucky."

The Jackson Highway to Louisville passes the Lincoln monument in the court house square at Hodgenville, nearly three miles from the birthplace. It is a heroic bronze statue of the President seated in a chair, the work of A. A. Weinman, a pupil of St. Gaudens, and was dedicated May 31, 1909. There are sympathy and tenderness in the face; ruggedness and purpose in the attitude. A replica has since been unveiled on the campus of the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Seven miles further, past unfenced cottages and browning fields, the highway plunges down Muldraugh's Hill, a twisting, tortuous way, one of the most scenic portions of the route. There are vistas of deep valleys; escarpments lifting high their crowns. At the base, where the road crosses Knob Creek, was the second Kentucky home of Abraham Lincoln. There his parents lived for more than five years until they removed to Indiana in the fall of 1816.

Over these inviting hills Abraham Lincoln played as a boy. Around this valley he must have toddled after

his father as he went to his tasks. No one who has seen the soil of the two farms can blame Thomas Lincoln for the move, regardless of his motives. The Nolin Creek soil appears impoverished by careless tillage, while the Knob Creek acres at Muldraugh's base are annually enriched from the alluvial deposits washed from its surrounding slopes.

It was late afternoon when the spot was reached. The sun was waning in the west, transforming the farm into an amphitheatre with circling walls. Hawks poised in mid-air, motionless as chips on a stream, floated above the scene watching for prey. Shadows of gray clouds came coasting down the wooded hillsides touching to richer tints the autumn reds and soft browns of the flaming forest. The harvest had been gathered in the barns. Withered corn fields touched by frost and twisted by wind rustled with every breeze. It was a place to make one's heart swell with pride.

Over the fence a few rods to the left is a clump of bushes marking the site of the vanished home. The place is now a pasture lot. Down the valley was a dried-up pool, where young Abraham went swimming and was saved from drowning by his boyhood chum, Austin Gallaher, a feat that rescued his name from oblivion. Hill and valley offer their lessons in trees and plants, animals and birds. It was a story book in nature; a schooling which, more than his books, was to aid Abraham Lincoln in life.

At this home, the youthful Abraham learned to help. He did chores, aided his mother and older sister Sarah by carrying the wood and water, and here felt the touch of his first deep sorrow when his younger

brother Thomas died—a mystery that hung as a ghost-like cloud over his young life.

When Miss Tarbell was collecting data for her life of Mr. Lincoln, she was given a reminiscence by Dr. J. J. Wright, of Emporia, Kansas, told by the President while in the White House.[1] The Knob Creek farm was the first home of his recollection.

"I remember the old home very well," he recalled. "Our farm was composed of three fields, which lay in the valley surrounded by high hills and deep gorges. Sometimes, when there came a big rain in the hills, the water would come down the gorges and spread over the farm. The last thing I remember of doing there was one Saturday afternoon; the other boys planted the corn in what we called the 'big field'—it contained seven acres—and I dropped the pumpkin seed. I dropped two seeds every other hill and every other row. The next Sunday morning there came a big rain in the hills; it did not rain a drop in the valley, but the water, coming down through the gorges, washed ground, corn, pumpkin seeds and all clear off the field."

I found the present owner of the Knob Creek Bottoms, J. W. Crosby, versatile with the traditions of his acres. Long before Thomas Lincoln came, there was a highway and over it passed a restless people pushing further into the interior. To the Lincoln home from Louisville came Christopher Columbus Graham, a naturalist, bringing stirring stories of Daniel Boone; by it passed soldiers of the War of 1812 to one of whom Abraham Lincoln related in later life he gave a fish he had just caught; and on their circuit ministers

[1] Tarbell, *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns*, p. 105.

paused to discuss religion and some to decry the evils of slavery. Those eager ears of a boy under seven must have learned many things that made him wonder. He pondered their words and stories after the guests had departed. He was living in an anti-slavery atmosphere.

Nor was Thomas Lincoln the vagabond he has been painted. The people of the Knob Creek community looked upon him as a useful citizen. He served as bondsman, and as appraiser of at least one estate;[1] for one year was a surveyor of the road that passed his doorway, and was active in the interests of the Baptist Church.

Still further along the tree-lined Jackson Highway, almost at the outskirts of Athertonville, is a little sign that marks the site of the first school attended by Sarah and Abraham Lincoln. The building stood until 1919 when it was dismantled. It was one of those "blab" schools where the pupils studied their lessons by reading aloud. It must have been a noisy beehive. Here Abraham learned his letters. His first teacher was Zachariah Riney. The second was Caleb Hazel. Both were men of strong personalities. They left their impress.

The schooling was of brief duration. Difficulties arose over the title to the farm on which Thomas Lincoln lived. He fought the litigation. Then someone told him of rich lands in Indiana, and the desire to push again to the frontier entered his soul. The matter was talked over around the humble fireside. It was decided that he should go and see. He built his own boat,

[1] One of the joint appraisers with Thomas Lincoln of the Jonathan Joseph estate in Hardin county court, in 1814, was Joseph La Follette, grandfather of the late Senator Robert M. La Follette of Wisconsin. Warren, *Ibid.* p. 113.

launched it in Knob Creek, paddled it down the meandering Rolling Fork into Salt River and then out upon the Ohio. The cargo of carpenter tools and four hundred gallons of whiskey were upset, but he went on with his mission. He selected a new farm site in Spencer county, Indiana, at a place which now bears the name of Lincoln City in honor of his son.

The day following my visit to the Knob Creek farm I was in Cannelton, Indiana, on the banks of the Ohio. Its river bosom was wide and swollen. Here I read an old record which describes the trek of the Lincoln family into Indiana in the early winter of 1816. It was found by Circuit Judge Oscar G. Minor. The document was dated August 20, 1866, and signed by Jacob Weatherholt, Jr., then seventy-one years old. It has been bound as an insert in a deed book.

Weatherholt wrote: "My father, Jacob Weatherholt, Sr., ferried Thomas Lincoln and his family, his wife, Nancy, daughter Sarah, and son Abraham, aged 8, on their way from the hills of Kentucky to Indiana. They had a yoke of oxen, a cow, a cart, and some camping outfit. They went by canoe and raft of logs from what is now Clover Creek, Ky., and camped overnight on land I now own, and next day made their way down the Indiana banks of the Ohio by Indian trails and paths, camping the second night at Rock Island, where General Lafayette was wrecked in 1825."

For the next fourteen years the Lincolns were residents of Indiana, beginning a new life in the wilderness.

CHAPTER II

AT NANCY HANKS LINCOLN PARK, INDIANA

THE grave of the mother of Abraham Lincoln in southern Indiana is a shrine. A part of the old farm has become the site of Lincoln City, a village to whom the word "city" is only a hope. The nearby knoll where reposes her dust of whom an unforgetful son said, "All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother," has been transformed into a state park.

Nowhere in the Union has a state paid a higher tribute to motherhood. The wheelmarks of traffic from four directions are the answer of a nation's appreciation.

I visited the grave before searching out the home site. It seemed so incongruous, when I recalled her humble lot, to enter now an ornamental gate blazoning her name, flanked by two bronzed lions, and to proceed along a modern driveway to the foot of a long hill. Up this slope they had carried her, more than a century ago, in a coffin made by her husband and son at their own home. I ascended the pathway in the shade of the elms and oaks and fruit-falling persimmon trees to the crest where her monument, erected a few years ago, dominates all others in God's acre.

Standing with uncovered head I read:

NANCY HANKS LINCOLN
MOTHER OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
DIED OCT. 5, 1818
AGED 35 YEARS

Behind this imposing granite block, within an iron fence that encloses the grave, is still another marker "erected by a friend of her martyred son, 1879."

For soil so hallowed, nature could not have offered a more beautiful environment for an eternal sleep. Come sun and rain to freshen the green-mantled earth which slopes away in three directions. Tall, well-groomed trees stand like guardians around the sanctuary of these kin-folk. Over all is a sacredness that stays the hand of desecration and invites no intrusion from a noisy world. Some inward urge prompts visitors to speak in low tones, and the heavy stillness of the retreat makes the dropping of nuts by squirrels from the branches seem an impertinence.

Nearing the last resting place of Nancy Hanks, I noticed that beside a vase of red dahlias, marigolds and vari-colored zinnias, fresh picked from the garden, was the card of a woman from Boonville, bearing a poetic tribute to the mother who in deep travail had given to the world the great soul of Abraham Lincoln.

Mothers do not forget!

Down the hill again I went to find the homesite of the Lincolns appropriately marked.[1] Not a splinter of the cabin was to be found, nor any remnant of an excavation that might have been the cellar. The door-yard is now the school ground of Lincoln City. It occupies a swell of earth opposite the park, with a railroad track and a trunk highway bisecting the little pathway that once led to the grave on the hill a quarter of a mile away. Few trees dot the Pigeon Creek land-

[1] Granite tablet four feet high bears the inscription: "Spencer County Memorial to Abraham Lincoln Who Lived on This Spot from 1816-1830."

scape where once stood a gloomy, tangled forest awaiting the axe and maul to turn it into log and fence rail.

When Thomas Lincoln first visited this country eighteen miles north of the Ohio in the fall of 1816, there were no settlers. All about was a dark, damp, unbroken wilderness—a solitude of shades, underbrush and swamp. Gashing the trees near the corners of his 160-acre selection and piling heaps of brush as marks of dividing lines to warn others that the land was already homesteaded, he had returned to Knob Creek, Kentucky, to fetch his family. A year was to pass before he was to go to the Federal land office at Vincennes to secure a patent on his new holdings. The migration was a slow journey. Possibly two weeks were required to traverse the one hundred miles to the forest home. Most accounts record the time of their Indiana coming as October.[1] If that be the month it must have been a glorious pilgrimage, for even today along these landscapes the golden plumage of autumn has splendors attractive for their variety.

Winter was approaching; no time was to be lost. Utilizing two trees about fourteen feet apart as corner-posts, a "half faced camp" was built of unbarked poles, with a roof of brush, and an opening to the southern exposure. It wasn't a log cabin. On the western prairies its counterpart today resembles a cattle shed, except for the stones before the wide entrance where a fire was kept roaring all day for heat and cooking, and blazing at night to frighten away prowling wild animals. It was a miserable existence when snow fell and a fickle wind filled the place with gusts of smoke and ashes. Here was spent the first winter under cir-

[1] Tarbell, *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns*, p. 119.

cumstances described many years later by Abraham Lincoln as "pretty pinching times."

There was much work to be done. Water must be brought daily from the spring nearly a mile away. Trees must be felled for a clearing and land must be freed of underbrush to make room for a spring planting. The axe is the pioneer's symbol of advance. "This most useful instrument," as Abraham Lincoln described it in 1860, was placed in his boyish hands upon his arrival in Indiana and was his constant companion until after he had reached his majority.

Spring came with sunshine and promise. A log cabin eighteen feet square was built of hewn logs, with pegs on the wall which Abraham used in climbing to his bed in the loft. There were no windows or doors, and the floor was of earth. But it surpassed the pole shed for comfort and roominess. I venture that even this desolate abode was made cheerful by the hands of Nancy Hanks. She must have reveled in the beauty of wild flowers—rose, buttercup and honeysuckle—which still adorn southern Indiana hillsides, and perhaps she found a place for planting them around her severe home. Rains washed the lands, leaving the fresh, pleasing scent of growing things. A few acres were put into crops.

Nor was she dissatisfied. After I had located the homes of her early neighbors in the immediate vicinity, I came to realize that they were her relatives near whom she had lived in Kentucky. She must have sent them an encouraging report that resulted in their moving. Among others were Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow, who had been Nancy's foster parents; with them Nancy's cousin, Dennis Hanks, whose remembrances

of this period are a storehouse of Lincoln lore, and Levi and Nancy Hall. These pioneer families lived on little. Corn must be carried to Ohio where the only mill was located; the men hunted, but game was plentiful; they gathered hickory nuts and walnuts and they raised a few bushels of turnips and potatoes. The first years were the hardest.

Only in the imagination can the old life be reconstructed. The "deer lick" which Mr. Lincoln remembered has vanished; such wild turkeys as he once shot and ever regretted are scarce, but quail and grouse abound in the valleys. Family traditions in the neighborhood have preserved the story of Lincoln's father offering his blessings over their repast consisting of potatoes alone.

"Dad, these are pretty poor blessings," Abe is said to have responded.

Just when the horizon began to brighten, with the log cabin completed, with a parcel of the lands cleared, with an occasional new settler choosing the neighborhood, a calamity befell the little settlement. It dampens one's enthusiasm to remember the deep sorrow which must have overwhelmed the youthful Abraham, now approaching ten, when many deaths resulted from an epidemic. They called it the "milk sick," a disease unknown to the present day medical profession, but believed to be a malaria. Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow died, followed by Levi and Nancy Hall. Then Mrs. Peter Brooner was stricken. Nancy Lincoln cared for her, encouraging her to fight its ravages because of her children.

"Nancy, I am going to die," she told her one day.

"Tut! Tut! You will soon be strong and well."

A few days after the death of Mrs. Brooner, Nancy was taken ill. Frail of body, she weakened quickly and hope gave way to silent resignation. She called her two children, Abe and Sarah, to her bedside.

"Be good to your father and sister," she whispered as she placed her hands on the head of her son of whose future greatness she held no vision.[1] "I hope you will live the life I have taught you, to love your kindred and worship God."

They buried her on the little hill above her home. There were no funeral services, because there was no preacher within a hundred miles. With the spring came the minister, and a saddened countryside gathered around the grave to hear Parson David Elkins extol the virtues of a pioneer woman. Then they went back to their hard tasks.

A century passes and the state raises beside her grave a solemn admonition:

THIS IS HALLOWED GROUND.
ITS MAINTENANCE AND CARE
INVOLVE GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.
WE EARNESTLY REQUEST THE
COOPERATION OF THE VISITING PUBLIC.

Vision, if you can, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, tired, pioneer farm woman, returning to earth and reading such words! How would she fathom their meaning? What mystery would she find as she viewed the widening phalanx of mankind crowding by an imposing monument or bringing flowers to her resting place? It is an incomprehensible suggestion, until her eyes should fall upon those chiseled words:

[1] Herndon, *Lincoln*, Vol. I. p. 27. Much of the information on Lincoln's life in Indiana was gathered by William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, immediately after the assassination. It comprises the most valuable source of information from people who knew Mr. Lincoln at this period.

MOTHER OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Death did not scatter this family. Little twelve-year-old Sarah took up the duties of mothering the household. But not for long. That fall when the harvest had been gathered, Thomas Lincoln went back to Kentucky, convinced the widow Sarah Bush Johnston, an old sweetheart, that he had always remembered her; paid up her few debts, and married her at Elizabethtown, December 2, 1819. Borrowing a team and wagon from his brother-in-law, Ralph Crume, he loaded his bride and her three children, and a motley array of furniture and utensils and made his return journey to Spencer county. The two Lincoln children have a stepmother.

Sarah Bush Lincoln must have been a woman of good, common sense and nobility of character. She chased the squalor out of that cabin. Her bedding and bureaus gave it a more cheerful aspect. She demanded that a floor be laid, doors hung and windows placed. How well she must have managed this crowded household of six children [1] appears from the tribute of President Lincoln that she was one of the strongest influences that guided him in his ambitions. She sent young Abraham off to school—not for a long time—but long enough to fire a thirst for knowledge. He learned to write and cipher with ease and fluency.

"He got about six months' schooling while he lived in Indiana," related Dennis Hanks. Thereafter he went no more. But nature continued to teach her lessons "by sight, scent and hearing."

Other changes came into the boy's life. After his

[1] Two of Thomas Lincoln; three of Mrs. Johnston, and Dennis Hanks, orphaned by the death of Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow.

eleventh year he shot up like a weed—spindling, over six feet tall, with large feet and hands. He sought the companionship of men. He liked to go to the mill with the grain; to lounge around the blacksmith shop and listen to the stories; to stop at Jones' store in Gentryville, the principal village, two miles from his home, to hear the arguments; to borrow the papers for reading. He always stayed until the stores were closed and the tallow dip extinguished. Such habits made some neighbors call him "lazy."

"Lincoln used to work on the farm I now operate," is a statement made with pride by many farmers in the vicinity of Lincoln City.

Down sandy by-roads that curved and recoiled like a snake, I drove into the country three miles to visit the Josiah Crawford farm, where I knew Lincoln had been intermittently employed. Mrs. Clara Crawford, widow of Abe Crawford, the grandson of Josiah, lives in a humble house above the paternal homesite. The farm buildings are low and quaint, with their home-made contraptions. The acres give her a living grudgingly. Long years of association with the land and its traditions keep her from going to the city to live with her married daughters. Many of the heirlooms from the Lincolns are still preserved. On the wall is a framed picture of Lincoln's cabinet, sent by the President following his inauguration.

"The family has always cherished a press made by Thomas Lincoln," said Mrs. Crawford, as she led the way to an upright addition above the root cellar a short distance from the house. "Lincoln's father was a carpenter, but Abe would never interest himself with this occupation."

It was a good piece of workmanship. The corners were evenly morticed; the doors fit snugly and the height and arrangements were well balanced. It was made of walnut.

"Abe and his sister, Sarah, worked for Grandfather Crawford," she declared. As she was talking I recalled that it was some eccentricity of the employer which prompted Abe to give him the sobriquet of "Blue Nose," a name which clung to him through life. "There are a lot of stories about Abe working on the old farm that are not in those books people read. Sarah helped about the house and Abe would grub, shuck corn, split rails and the like. When around the house he was always reading. All those stories about Abe and the Crawfords have been told by the old folk around home so many times, I could not forget them."

"Did you ever hear about Abe borrowing Weems' *Life of Washington* from Mr. Crawford?" I asked. She smiled.

"That's the book Abe took home and when it rained at night it got wet. Grandfather Crawford made him pull fodder three days to pay for it. Right down the road there, where the path leads up the hill to the pear tree is the field. It's all weeds and dewberry vines now. I guess you know Abe helped to dig a well over on that farm, too. Men didn't get much pay then. Money was scarce—about twenty-five cents a day. Abe always took the money home. They say he liked to work at Crawford's because they had reading around the house."

Of the influence of that one volume upon his life, we have Mr. Lincoln's own words.

On his journey to Washington for his inauguration

in 1861 he addressed the senate of the State of New Jersey:

"May I be pardoned if upon this occasion I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger generation have ever seen —Weems' *Life of Washington.* I remember all the accounts there given of the battlefields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river, the contest with the Hessians, the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single Revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for."

It was to satiate a thirst for knowledge that after nightfall he would lie on the floor around the fireplace and by the light of a pine knot cipher with a charred stick his "examples" on the wooden shovel and then obliterate his work with a drawshave; that he wrote crude poetry, sometimes in satire on neighbors and friends; that he read such books as the Bible, which undoubtedly influenced his masterful literary style of later years, *Pilgrim's Progress,* Aesop's *Fables, Robinson Crusoe* and a *History of the United States.* He copied and memorized the phrases which stimulated his fancy.

It was the reading of these volumes in an environ-

ment of hard work which produced an effect upon the silent forces of the mind that has given America one of the greatest figures in world history. Even in these days of progress and invention the visitor to the Gentryville community will be unable to reach any other conclusion. In this vicinity are no prosperous barns, no imposing residences, few model farms. There are acres of weedy fields; crops seem below the average. The rivalry for home and land improvement is absent.

Around the country stores men sit and argue. Hitching posts for animals are still in use. The industrious youths leave for the city at the first opportunity.

Away from the scene, inspired men and women of the Indiana Lincoln Union are making plans for a more imposing memorial to rise from the Lincoln countryside. Home folk seek to learn little of their doings but wait in hope. With it may come the rainbow of prosperity.

Before leaving, I visited the little Pigeon church where Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln worshiped, nearly two miles from the Lincoln City community. In fact, they helped to build this edifice. Thomas Lincoln was united in membership by a letter he had brought from Kentucky and she "by experience." The name of Thomas Lincoln appears frequently in the church records as moderator, messenger, and arbiter of disputes. Abraham Lincoln never joined Pigeon Church, but he attended services regularly with his parents. At the first opportunity afterward he would deliver in tone and gesture the sermon he had heard to his companions. He had a retentive memory.

The doorway of the little white church stood ajar. The benches were rude. A kerosene lamp stood on

the altar beside the Bible. I sat in the doorway and read the stern tenets of this sect. They are all summed up in a single sentence by the Rev. W. E. Barton:

"In Lincoln's day they stood for the good old Two-Seed, Hard-Shell, Anti-Missionary, Predestinarian gospel, and he was not much of a preacher who could not be heard a mile." [1]

Out in the cemetery at the rear of the church, among the many graves of pioneers, a striking monument has been erected to Lincoln's only sister, Sarah, who had married Aaron Grigsby, and died a year later in 1828 at the birth of her first child.

It was another of those tragic incidents which made Abraham the more melancholy. But absence from home much of the time kept him from brooding.

My pilgrimages in search of Lincoln haunts took me to the Ohio river, at a point near where the family had crossed on their entrance to Indiana in the fall of 1816. From the time that Abraham was fifteen or sixteen, he spent several months each year away from home working wherever employment could be found. This itinerant life appealed to his nature. It gave him a chance to meet men. When the crowd went to a camp meeting, a raising bee, a political gathering or a murder trial, he went along curious to learn the ways of the world. He came to know Judge John Pitcher of Rockport and Judge John A. Brackenridge of Boonville. Association with such superior men and their libraries lifted him above the common environment.

It was on one of these afternoon rambles in the vicin-

[1] Barton, *Life of Lincoln*, Vol. I, p. 129.

ity of the Ohio river, south of Gentryville, that I came upon a large sign on the outskirts of Troy, a river port:

ANDERSON CREEK
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
Operated a Ferry Boat Here in 1826

In those days the Ohio river was the artery of travel to the Mississippi valley. Troy was an important station where the steamers took wood aboard. Green Taylor, a pioneer merchant, who owned the ferry, hired Lincoln to work during the summer for six dollars a month and board with the family. The one thing that Captain Taylor remembered about Lincoln in after life was that he "often read far into the night."

It was probably the next year that Lincoln by his first business venture earned a dollar in less than a day, an incident which he related to William H. Seward during his first term as President.[1] It was one of those things which made a deep impression on his mind.

"Seward, did you ever hear how I earned my first dollar?"

"No," replied his secretary, "I would like to hear about it."

"Well, when about eighteen years of age, I had obtained consent of my mother to build a flatboat, which I intended to load with produce to sell down the river. There were no wharves in those days and it was the custom of steamers to stop in mid-stream to take and discharge passengers. I was contemplating my new boat and wondering if I could make it stronger or improve it in any part, when two men with trunks came

[1] Hanaford, *Abraham Lincoln*, p. 156; Whipple, *The Story Book of Lincoln*, p. 63.

down to the shore in carriages and looking at different boats singled out mine.

" 'Will you take us and our trunks out to the steamer?' asked one of them.

" 'Certainly,' said I, glad to have the chance of earning something. The trunks were put in my boat, the passengers seated themselves on them and I sculled them out to the steamer. They got on board and I lifted the trunks and put them on the deck. The steamer was about to put on steam again, when I called out:

" 'You have forgotten to pay me.'

"Each of them took a silver half-dollar and threw it on the bottom of my boat. I could scarcely believe that I, the poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day. I was a more hopeful and thoughtful boy from that time."

It was probably this incident that gave rise to the first lawsuit in which Abraham Lincoln was defendant. Dill Brothers operated a ferryboat on the opposite side of the river, across from Anderson Creek, under a license from the state of Kentucky. They had Lincoln brought into the justice court of Squire Samuel Pate, near Lewisport, charged with operating a ferry without a license. Lincoln defended himself. He pointed out that he had not rowed across the river, but had brought the passengers to mid-stream. The court was impressed with the argument that Lincoln had violated no law of Kentucky and acquitted him.[1] It may be that this occurrence turned his attention to the law, and when David Turnham, the county sheriff, later loaned him the first law book to come into his hands, a copy

[1] Townsend, William H., *Abraham Lincoln, Litigant*, pp. 30-40.

RUTLEDGE TAVERN

SQUIRE PATE'S HOME, LEWISPORT

of the Statutes of Indiana, he found it interesting reading. It furnished the Constitution which gave him an idea of the structure of government, and he must have read the law forbidding slavery north of the Ohio river.

Squire Pate's old home still stands on the outskirts of Lewisport. It is a two-story, frame building with a long veranda. If traditions are to be recognized as fact, Lincoln came often thereafter and sitting on the porch received words of encouragement from the county justice to persevere.

That single business venture led to others. It was not to become a ferryman that Lincoln had built a flatboat. He had hopes of a real adventure. At eighteen he had conceived the idea that people would place their produce in his care to take down the Mississippi for sale at New Orleans. He had heard of others who had gone into this little-known business world and he longed for the opportunity. Though the people did not respond to his offering, his chance came the year following.

James Gentry, the storekeeper at Gentryville, near Lincoln's home, and the richest man in the community, owned a ferry on the Ohio river at Rockport, about ten miles down the stream from Anderson Creek. He now made Lincoln's dream a reality. Temporarily moving his family to Rockport, he arranged for a shipment by flatboat of corn meal, bacon and other provisions, under the supervision of his son, Allen, with Abraham Lincoln as "bow hand."

Save for the beauties of hill and valley and the placid expanse of the Ohio river, I could find no vestige of the early haunts of Lincoln at Rockport. But when

the sun was down and twilight stole over the moonlit scene, I fancied that I could see the gaunt Lincoln, first thrilled by the touch of a woman's hand, talking with Kate Robey of the Gentry household as they sat upon the bank.

"One evening Abe and I were sitting on the banks of the Ohio watching the moon over the neighboring hills," said Kate Robey years afterward.[1] "I said to Abe that the moon was going down. He said to me, 'That's not so; it don't really go down; it seems to. The earth turns from west to east, and the revolution of the earth carries it under, as it were; we do the sinking as you call it. The moon keeps as still as a tree. Its sinking is only an illusion.'

"I replied, 'Abe, what a fool you are.' I know now that I was the fool, not Lincoln. I am now thoroughly satisfied that Abe knew the general laws of astronomy. He was the learned boy among us unlearned folk."

The experiences of that trip in April, 1828, by means of a boat guided by handsweeps down the storied Ohio and the majestic Mississippi were never effaced. It awakened new ambitions. The nature of the cargo made it necessary to trade along the sugar coast, and one night they were attacked by seven negroes intent upon robbing them.

"We were hurt some in the mêlée," commented Lincoln afterward, "but succeeded in driving the negroes from the boat, and then cut cable, weighed anchor and left."

Three months later they returned to Indiana by steamboat. The trip had been a profitable one to the

[1] Afterwards she married Allen Gentry, his partner on the voyage to New Orleans. See Herndon, *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 39.

OLD TAVERN, ROCKPORT

employer. The eight dollars a month Lincoln had earned was ample compensation for the horizon it unfolded. He had made a first-hand acquaintance with slave conditions and the auction block at New Orleans. Lincoln was now a man. He had discarded the coonskin cap and the breeches of leather he wore as a boy. No longer did he go barefoot. He was a giant of strength ready for the work of the world. He awaited his majority which would give him his freedom. He helped his father, but his thoughts and ideals were above their homely vernacular[1] and cramped surroundings. Enlightenment to him had become an attribute which no misfortune could depress nor enemy alienate.

Opportunities for debate afforded at the country store had given him a self-mastery. Politics have an innate fascination for frontier people. Lincoln's people were Democrats—followers of Andrew Jackson. But reading the papers and discussion with others had changed Abraham's views. That singular attribute of independence was already manifest. He found his ideal in Henry Clay—"The Harry of the West"—the exponent of internal improvements. Rockport and Gentryville were among the communities visited by him fourteen years later, in 1844, when he was making speeches for Henry Clay, candidate for President. In Rockport the old hotel where he spent the night still stands on the hillside above the flowing Ohio.

Before the height of his ambition was to be attained, other years of struggle and hardship were to intervene.

Lincoln's own family were dissatisfied with their future in Indiana. The soil was no longer fruitful. La-

[1] Beveridge, Albert J., *Lincoln,* Vol. I, p. 53.

bor as they might, there was only a bare living. The dreaded "milk sick" again invaded the community. Thomas Lincoln sold his acres in the early winter of 1829 and prepared to move in the spring to Illinois.

Never again was the routine of manual labor to appear the same to Abraham Lincoln. Life on the Ohio had changed him; in his meager readings he had met the commanders of history. Their companionship he sought. The fairy world of business and commerce had smiled. It beckoned him to release the axe and the grub hoe. He became imbued with a determination to make something of himself. His ambitions for service and achievement had been kindled.

Indiana had lighted his lamp to find the way.

CHAPTER III

TO THE TRAIL'S END IN ILLINOIS

"THE Lincoln Way" is the trail of an ox-drawn, covered wagon from Gentryville, Indiana, to a point eight miles west of Decatur, Illinois. It is not a national highway, but a route by which the family of Abraham Lincoln migrated a distance of two hundred and fifty miles—following another rainbow.

I remember that I felt a certain affection for the old trail when I attempted to trace it. On all wanderings, I prefer to make pilgrimages along ways that are touched by the muse of literature or the charm of historical associations. Even now I cannot contemplate the difficulties, the loneliness and despair incident to such a pioneer trip in March winds without a feeling of deep emotion.

An overland journey that took them fifteen days now requires less than ten hours. Where then stood immeasurable areas of tall, dead prairie grass now extend expanding horizon lines of land under cultivation. Where then was only an occasional pioneer cabin, now are prosperous cities linked by railroads and paved highways. It is difficult to picture the way as it was, for the hand of progress has turned buffalo paths into turnpikes and thrown fine bridges over streams that once must be forded.

It is the greatness of Abraham Lincoln, the young

man who goaded the oxen along this mucky route, that has marked this trail for everlasting fame.

The village of Gentryville has changed but little. Around it in the winter of 1829-30 centered the preparations of the Lincoln family for the spring journey. Aside from their desire to leave the country infested with "milk sick," their haste was precipitated by the encouraging reports of John Hanks, who had gone into Macon county, Illinois, the year before. It required little urging to stir the migratory spirit of Thomas Lincoln. He had lived in Indiana fourteen years and was as poor as the day he came. His hope of paying for a quarter section of land, which he had entered on his coming, had been shattered. He had been compelled to release one eighty but was allowed the privilege of applying all payments to the smaller tract. Anxious to depart from his farm, he sacrificed it to James Gentry for about one hundred dollars; his livestock and grain were purchased by David Turnham.

Before completing their plans Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln made their last visit to Kentucky, disposing of a lot in Elizabethtown to which Mrs. Lincoln had fallen heir, when her first husband died, for $123. This gave them about $200 to start life again in a new country. They spent the remainder of the winter in making ready.

Abraham, who had been chopping wood and selling it to Josiah Crawford, his literary benefactor, was called home to assist in the building of a wagon, the first to be owned by his father. Wheels, axles, pegs and boxes were all made of wood, except the felly rims which were of iron. The Pigeon Creek Church, after

some jealous bickering, issued to Thomas and Sarah Lincoln credentials of membership. Soon the family were making their farewells.

A few days prior to their departure Abraham went to the Jones store, where he had spent many winter evenings in discussion, and struck a bargain with the owner. Only two weeks before he had reached his majority and he now determined on a little business venture of his own.

"I have saved $30, which I want to invest in notions to peddle on the way to Illinois," Lincoln told the storekeeper.

"I'll help you select the things that will sell," Jones volunteered. Pins, needles, buttons, thread and other household necessities were chosen. After the Lincolns reached their new home near Decatur, Abraham wrote back that he had doubled his money. It may be that his experience as a salesman prompted him two years later to become a storekeeper, but I have found no historical evidence to support this theory.

In trailing the Lincoln family into Illinois I followed the routes agreed upon by the investigators named by the States of Indiana and Illinois a few years ago. They spent nearly three years in sifting the evidence, and while there are some who disagree with the findings, the same objection may be raised to other incidents in Mr. Lincoln's life.

"Close relatives of Mr. Lincoln differ as to the exact number composing the party which left Gentryville, Spencer county, Indiana, about March 1, 1830," says Charles M. Thompson in his report to the Illinois Historical Society on the investigation of the Lincoln

Way.[1] "It is certain, however, that there were at least thirteen: Thomas Lincoln, his wife Sarah, his son Abraham, and stepson John D. Johnston; Squire Hall, his wife Matilda, and their son John; Dennis Hanks, his wife Elizabeth, and their four children—Harriet (Mrs. Chapman), John, Sarah Jane (Mrs. Dowling), and Nancy. There are also differences of opinion as to the methods of travel and means of transportation. Some have claimed that the party had but one wagon, others two, and still others three; all agree, however, that heavy wagons were used and that they were drawn by oxen, or oxen and horses."

I fancied that with such a large company there was only enough room for bedding, cooking utensils and provisions. Most of the furniture was left behind. The women rode but the men walked beside the team and oxen directing their movements by goad and sharp yells. Frost was going out of the earth; roads were muddy and streams were swollen. They made their camps along the way. Traveling in the morning when the ground was frozen was easier, but as the day advanced the jolting track became miry, the load bounding and rocking as it rolled into deep pockets of slush. It was a slow and tiresome journey [2] and there was little protection from the weather.

State trunk highways in Indiana traverse many miles of the line of route through Dale, Jasper, northwesterly to Ireland, Petersburg, and thence to Vincennes. Some day tablets of bronze will guide the tourist.[3] Where

[1] Thompson, Charles M., *Investigation of the Lincoln Way*, published by Illinois Historical Society (1915), p. 2.

[2] A brief report of this journey is found as a footnote in Herndon, *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 59. It is a description given to his law partner by Mr. Lincoln.

[3] Report, Lincoln Highway Commission to Governor Samuel H. Ralston, Dec. 15, 1916, p. 17.

then were bogs and brush and tangled woods, groves of peach and pear orchards now break the monotony of the scenery. Cozy-looking farm homes, sequestered behind trees, lend a certain enchantment. The golden sunshine of fall lured me to while away time in the leafy shade, watching farmers at their plowing and children going to school.

Dreamily I wondered if some of these pupils might have been the descendants of that Indiana family of which Lincoln in after life told the story to his cabinet. He was admonishing his official family to keep from war with other nations and used his experience to illustrate his view. Lincoln said he approached a house near the Indiana-Illinois line to sell some of his notions only to find that a family row was in progress. The woman pushed her husband aside when she saw Lincoln approach, and demanded his business.

"Nothing, ma'am, I merely dropped in as I came along to see how things were going," Lincoln responded in as gentle a tone as possible.

"Well, you needn't wait," she snapped in a voice of irritated authority. "There's trouble here, and lot of it too, but I can manage my own affairs without the help of outsiders. I run this house, and I don't want no one sneakin' round trying to find out how I do it either."

Presently the urge to hurry on aroused me; the smoke of some city appeared ahead. There must have come a thrill to Abraham Lincoln upon entering Vincennes. I found it an engaging city of romance. It is the oldest town in Indiana, and he must have known something of its stirring Revolutionary history from his father's

visit thirteen years earlier when Thomas Lincoln registered his patent to Indiana lands. Only a few years before their trek, the cathedral, still an object of interest, with its spire towering above a mass of other buildings, was erected, and Grouseland, the palatial mansion of William Henry Harrison, the first territorial governor of the Northwest, was built on the banks of the Wabash. Both are well preserved, venerable landmarks.

One fact is known. A paper had been published in Vincennes for nearly a quarter of a century, and Mr. Lincoln relates that there he first saw a printing press. Something in the spirit of Vincennes makes one think that even in those early days Abraham Lincoln must have been impressed. It was the site of Fort Sackville, the scene of the daring capture of the Mississippi Valley in the cause of the Revolution. That a boy as inquisitive as he passed through the portals of such a place without learning something of its historical significance seems to me improbable. It is the one place on the journey where his curiosity must have broken bounds. They ferried the Wabash, above the present highway bridge, midway between the cathedral and the Harrison Manor at a place which has appropriately been marked.

I experienced more trouble attempting to take a picture where the abandoned ferry was located than at any other point on the route. It was raining, and inquisitive onlookers kept me in the wet asking for information as to the use I intended to make of the photograph. The Lincoln trail marker was half hidden by the gaudy advertising of a river excursion. But through the delay I obtained more than a fleeting

LINCOLN'S FLATBOAT LANDING

acquaintance with the spot where the family looked back for the last time on the receding hills of Indiana.

The route through Illinois is more tedious to follow. On only a part of it can one travel trunk highways; the remainder are county and town roads. As officially determined, the way[1] leads from Vincennes into Illinois to Lawrenceville, thence back to the west bank of the Wabash, north through Russellville, Palestine, Hutsonville, York and Darwin. Here the trail turns toward the interior, passing south of Charleston to cross the Embarrass river at McCann's Ford, thence to Paradise, south of Mattoon and zigzagging to Dead Man's Grove, west of Charleston, and then to Nelson and Decatur.

For hours we hurried along through a country dense with corn fields. I shall never forget the impression made upon my companion. He had been raised on a farm and found a pleasure in the bounteous crops. Somehow those of Illinois taxed his admiration.

"Corn! Corn! Corn!" he would mutter to himself. After a few miles more were passed, I would hear him repeating the remark until I, too, caught the infection of this wonderful corn empire. But as Lincoln first saw the country it was an expanse of dead prairie grass. When not enjoying the farm scenery of these open, well cultivated fields, my companion recalled incidents he had read or experienced. He possesses an abiding interest in the little humanitarian things that characterized Mr. Lincoln.

"Do you suppose this is the stream where the dog

[1] Thompson, *The Lincoln Way*, Ibid., p. 14; *Shelby County Leader*, Shelbyville, Ill., Feb. 7, 1929, gives a description of the route in detail.

was almost deserted?" he inquired when crossing the Embarrass river.

"That's the only story I ever read about Lincoln in connection with his coming to Illinois," he continued. "Lincoln insisted on bringing his dog with him. One day the little fellow fell behind and failed to catch up until after the caravan had forded the stream. Missing him, Lincoln looked back to see the dog whining in great distress. The ice was so broken that the dog could not cross. Some of the members of the family wanted to push on, but Lincoln refused. Pulling off his shoes and stockings he waded across and returned triumphantly with the overjoyed animal. Many years after, Lincoln related this story to his law partner and in commenting upon it declared that the gratitude of the dog repaid him for the exposure he had undergone."

That evening on reaching Decatur, I parked my car in Lincoln Square before a tablet which read:

IN THIS SQUARE WHICH BEARS HIS NAME,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN, THE YOUTH, PAUSED
IN THE SPRING OF 1830 ON HIS JOURNEY
FROM INDIANA INTO MACON COUNTY,
WHICH WAS TO BE HIS FIRST HOME IN
ILLINOIS. HERE IN CIRCUIT RIDING DAYS HE
PRACTICED LAW.

A heavy rain during the night did not dampen our enthusiasm to continue the next morning to the site of the first Lincoln home in Illinois. Eight miles west of Decatur and south of Harristown, we found a country road that led toward the Sangamon river. Just then a farmer passed us in his automobile. I hailed him for directions.

"I am looking for the site of the old home of Abra-

ham Lincoln in this country," I explained. "Can you tell me whether it was down this way?"

"No Lincolns ever lived around here," he remonstrated. "I have farmed here more than twenty years and I guess I would have heard about them."

With that explanation he left us. Afterward I wondered about that fellow, for within two miles we came to the Scroggins estate and upon inquiry learned that the Lincoln lands were a part of its farm and that the cabin site had been marked with imposing ceremonies.

A freshly graded lane, soft and slippery, that leads from the main highway to the back forty acres made walking a necessity. My first impression was that I had been to the place many times. I had seen so many pictures of its yard and trees and had read so many times the accounts of the building of the log cabin and the enclosing of the fifteen acres of clearing with rail fences, that, transformed as it was, it still seemed a pioneer reality.[1] I viewed the scene with feelings of veneration and awe that carried me back a century.

It had been reached at the end of a fortnight by the Lincoln cavalcade. John Hanks had selected the spot and with a family of men as large as the Lincoln contingent it did not take long to build a cabin. The walnut rails which Abraham Lincoln split in those first few weeks, before he started out for himself, were destined to make him famous politically. But of this he had no premonition.

[1] Dennis Hanks, his cousin John Hanks, and Abraham Lincoln built the cabin. Dennis remained one year, when he with Thomas Lincoln removed to Coles county, Illinois, where Thomas Lincoln died in January, 1851. Dennis Hanks died at Paris, Illinois, Oct. 21, 1892, aged 93, killed by a runaway team. He had been attending an "Emancipation Day" celebration. His remains rest in the Charleston, Illinois, cemetery.

Two ideas suggested themselves to me. Never had I seen longer ears of corn than were grown on this farm. Why then had Lincoln's father deserted this fertile soil at the end of a year and moved sixty miles away into Coles county? Game was plentiful in the region; it was a natural apiary. Maybe it was the ague that troubled them for months. I really do not know. Again, why did the early settlers find it necessary to clear away forests for their farms, when the Illinois prairies awaited only the plow to attune them to harvests? To my last question I found an answer.

"The pioneers believed that land that did not grow trees would not raise crops," suggested the tenant on the Lincoln homestead.

There was little to photograph. A frame tenant house stands near the site of the log home.[1] In the shade of the trees is a boulder bearing a marker:

THIS TABLET MARKS THE
SITE OF THE FIRST HOME IN ILLINOIS
OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
1831
ERECTED BY DECATUR CHAPTER OF THE
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1904.

A windmill creaks with the lazy wind. But I never visited a place where fancy caressed so fondly and quickly my imagination. Lincoln's days of railsplitting here were to become the dramatic opening scene of a great national pageant. Why should not the state turn this farm into a memorial and place at the gate-

[1] James Shoaff, publisher of the *Decatur Magnet* in 1865, when President Lincoln was assassinated, removed the Lincoln log cabin that stood west of Decatur to Boston and exhibited it on Boston Common with John and Dennis Hanks. Later it was removed to Chicago and exhibited, then sold to an English syndicate, which lost it en route to some foreign city. See supplement to *Lerna Weekly Eagle*, Lerna, Illinois, Feb. 12, 1928.

way a replica of the statue of the Railsplitter, which stands in Garfield Park, Chicago? That would make of it a real inspirational shrine.

Then as one strolled under the shades of the tall trees or reclined on the bluff above the lazy Sangamon, one felt the picture impressing the story upon the mind that success came from toil—hard work of the most strenuous nature.[1]

After the log house had been raised, the fence built and the crop put in, Abraham Lincoln struck out for himself. Nearly a year was spent in the immediate neighborhood, plowing, chopping and planting for neighbors.

"Across the Sangamon river about three miles you will find the old home of Major William Warnick, where Lincoln worked a good deal during the summer of 1830 and the following winter," suggested the tenant, who had become familiar with the local history through the remarks of many visitors. "You will be able to recognize it from the three gables in front. It is the oldest house in Macon county."

The place is worthy of a visit. The house was originally built of logs before the organization of the county. Many years after, it became the Ekel Tavern, or Eight Mile Tavern.[2] Some years ago clapboards were nailed to the logs to improve the appearance, and its walls were plastered. Where the boards are loose, the squared timbers may still be seen.

The brief romance of a love story pervades the old home. A few years before his death in 1914, Robert Warnick, a son of the founder, related for historical

[1] See Chapter XIII, First Presidential Endorsement at Decatur.
[2] Now known as the Hudelson Estate.

purposes the relations of Mr. Lincoln with the Warnick family during the fall of 1830 and the winter of 1831.

The place is now tenanted by the family of S. P. Ross, whose warm interest has resulted in the gathering of many interesting stories and valuable relics of pioneer days.

"It was during the time that Mr. Lincoln was splitting one thousand rails for Major Warnick that he is said to have fallen in love with the Major's daughter, Polly," said Mrs. Ross. "In this long room at the right of the entrance the young people are traditionally reported to have spent many evenings with the family. It was probably Mr. Lincoln's first serious love affair."

Recent historical investigations confirm their attachment. But Major Warnick is reported to have opposed their friendship because young Lincoln was poor. Anyway, within a year Polly Warnick was married to another.[1]

It was while sitting in the quiet parlor talking with Mrs. Ross about the memories that haunted her roof, that I was agreeably surprised with a further discovery.

"Before you go," she suggested, "maybe you would like to visit the attic room, where Mr. Lincoln slept?"

"I certainly would," I responded. Somehow it had not occurred to me before that Mr. Lincoln had been more than a passing guest at the place.

"It was during the winter of 1830-1831 that Mr. Lincoln's canoe was upset in the Sangamon river and by the time he reached the house his feet were frozen," she continued. "Mrs. Warnick cared for him as a

[1] Barton, *The Women Lincoln Loved*, pp. 157-166; Tarbell, *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns*, pp. 158-159.

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THE RAILSPLITTER

mother for several weeks. He spent his days in this large sitting-room and slept at night in the attic above."

Thereupon she led the way up a cramped little stairway to the rooms under the gables. They were being used as a storehouse for unused furniture, pioneer relics and bags of potatoes.

"My husband plowed up this old axe a few days ago in one of the back fields," she explained. It was deeply corroded with rust, and as I handled it I wondered if Lincoln may not have used it while helping with the clearing.

"But what is this?" I asked, pointing to a long, weathered pole that rested on an old-fashioned baby cradle against the wall.

"That is one of the walnut rails that has been preserved from one of the old fences. When interest became so great over the splitting of rails, we thought we ought to keep one."

In a moment I had reached the bottom of the stairs and was looking for my camera. Under the dim light of the narrow gables I took a picture. The rail was the most interesting find of the kind on the entire journey.

That afternoon on reaching Springfield I went direct to the Lincoln tomb to relate my experiences to Mr. H. W. Fay, the custodian, one of the closest students of details in Mr. Lincoln's life.

"The story of Mr. Lincoln's splitting the rails on the Warnick farm and the care of him given by Mrs. Warnick is all authenticated," said Mr. Fay. He went to a box in search of some document but continued the conversation.

"That was the winter of the deep snow. It lasted for

two months. Birds and animals perished and the winter was so severe that Mr. Lincoln's father vowed that he would move out in the spring.

"Besides working for Major Warnick, Mr. Lincoln made rails for William Miller, receiving his pay in homespun clothing. He was so tall it took a lot of cloth. He split 1,100 rails in exchange for a pair of pantaloons, but Mrs. Miller thought he also needed a waistcoat and made one for him. In return he split more rails—2,500 all told. Only recently we have come into possession of the picture of Mrs. Mary Y. Miller, who made Mr. Lincoln his clothing during his first year in Illinois."

The Railsplitter was looking for a more varied employment. Just as spring was coming, opportunity appeared. Denton Offut, the merchant at New Salem, hired Abraham, John Hanks and John Johnston, his stepbrother, to take a flatboat with produce down the river to New Orleans. This was to be his second journey into the world of business. When the ice broke up they paddled down the Sangamon in a canoe to engage near New Salem in a venture that was to have a potent bearing upon the course his budding career was now to take.

As I crossed the murky river near Springfield, I made no stop. My mind was busy with plans for another pilgrimage.

CHAPTER IV

OLD SALEM RISES OUT OF THE PAST

OUT of the dust and decay of seventy-five years, the village of New Salem, Illinois, is rising again with its log buildings and rough-hewn, clapboard shops to stand as a memorial of the environment of Abraham Lincoln during the formative period of his life.

Nowhere in the world is there a monument to any man like the one now being undertaken at New Salem, twenty miles northwest of Springfield. Here are no polished marble shafts, no fashioned statues in bronze, no artist's sculptured tablets; only a village rebuilt of logs and rip-sawed lumber, several of them being the exact material of the original houses. All of the thirty or more buildings that stood when Lincoln lived there from 1831 to 1837 are to be restored. A dozen weather-seasoned structures are already in their places and others will be completed in time.

When Lincoln's old home town is rebuilt, its cow-paths and roads restored, its cockpit and race-track on the high bluffs above the Sangamon river rejuvenated, it will appear as it did when he clerked in its stores; told stories to the loungers under the shades of the still standing oaks; pitched horseshoes and wrestled with the boys on the hill slope; carried the post-office around in the top of his hat, and in the evenings studied surveying or law by the flicker of burning shavings on the hearth of the Onstott cooper shop.

No Lincoln shrine will have a greater sentimental interest than this old town. For here lived Ann Rutledge, Lincoln's first love, whom he probably would have married had she lived, but who died in 1835 and whose passing may have made it easier for him to leave soon afterward.

During the six years that Lincoln lived there, the town was known as New Salem. With the founding of Petersburg, two miles away on the prairie below, its activities subsided. One after another the buildings were moved to the new village, whose location was more accessible to the surrounding countryside. Lincoln departed in 1837. He had come there, as he himself said, "a strange, friendless, uneducated, penniless boy working on a flatboat at $10 a month." He left after six years, having twice represented his people in the legislature, and in the meantime studied law and otherwise acquired an education which soon brought him recognition at the bar of the state. New Salem may thus be called his alma mater. Soon thereafter the seat of Menard county was acquired by Petersburg. That recognition spelled ruin for New Salem.

Never did the old life at New Salem seem more surely to have departed. The buildings molded and rotted; underbrush grew rank on the hilltop; the scene became a wild pasture lot. But the people still venerated the place. Affectionately they came to call it "Old Salem" and made it a picnic spot for their families. With the passing decades a renewed historical interest arrived. In 1906 the property was privately acquired and donated to the nearby Chautauqua. Twelve years later, in 1918, the citizens of Petersburg banded themselves into the Old Salem Lincoln League and began

to advocate preservation of the remaining landmarks. An appeal was made to the Illinois legislature, and on April 3, 1919, the Old Salem State Park was created and the property came under state control. Acting in co-operation, the state authorities and the members of the league have carried forward the present restoration. The grounds have been opened to the public and Lincoln's old home is now a meeting place for the thousands who seek inspiration in the humble simplicity of his early environment.

With this quickened local concern has developed a national and international interest. Nominal subscriptions to help in the movement have voluntarily come from many states. From England, former Premier Lloyd George, a Lincoln admirer, learning of the enterprise sent a $5 contribution "to the fund for preserving Abraham Lincoln's old town as a public memorial and a park."

And yet it was only by accident that Lincoln became a citizen of New Salem. Because of the possibilities for waterpower development to run a saw and gristmill, the Sangamon river site at the base of the one-hundred-foot promontory was selected by the Rev. John M. Camron and his uncle, James Rutledge, July 29, 1828. On October 23, 1829, the lands on the bluff were surveyed and the town was recorded with the name of New Salem. The dam and mill were immediately constructed and put into operation; the semblance of a primitive village started and on Christmas day, 1829, a post-office was established, to continue a seven-year existence during five of which Abraham Lincoln lived in the village.

The produce of the surrounding country was bought

by Denton Offut, trader and speculator, who planned a flatboat shipment to New Orleans in the spring of 1831. Hanks made a contract that included Lincoln and his stepbrother, John D. Johnston, to pilot the enterprise. After building the boat, the men started on the trip about the middle of April, 1831. By that time the high waters of the Sangamon had subsided and on April 19 the rude craft snagged on the mill dam at New Salem. The whole village turned out. All efforts to loosen it were futile. Finally Lincoln inquired for an auger. He was directed to the Onstott cooper shop. By boring a hole and shifting the cargo forward, he let out the bilge water and the boat floated over the dam.

That chance meeting with the people of New Salem was marked with destiny. Returning from New Orleans in July, Lincoln was employed again by Offut. This time it was to operate a store which he had opened in New Salem. For the next six years, the story of New Salem is inextricably entwined with the life of Abraham Lincoln.

Within this community of less than thirty homes and at the height of its prosperity with fewer than 200 population, a great soul was nurtured for its tremendous responsibilities. And such poverty was there! No one who has not lived its life nor seen the rude, sun-blistered log shacks at New Salem today can realize how humble it all was. The most pretentious home was that of Dr. Allen and it had three small rooms on the ground floor, the whole structure resembling in size a one-car garage of today.

"You're going to be disappointed if you're looking

ONSTOTT COOPER SHOP

for big things out there," said the taxi-driver who directed me to the park.

"Why do you think so?" I inquired.

"Well, it's nothing like the stores and houses of today. It is altogether different. Just little places and the snow sifts through the cracks. It's mighty hard to understand that these were the best homes good people lived in less than one hundred years ago."

After one glance over the premises, I was willing to agree with him.

But when I came to the Onstott cooper shop, rebuilt from its original timbers of nearly one hundred years ago, I realized what an inspiration this New Salem restoration will be to the future boys and girls of America. Today the hearth is cold and barren. But when Lincoln lived there its shavings sputtered a fitful light by which he prepared himself for his destiny. A surge of joy thrilled me. Before me was the material symbol by which an honest soul, bowed in tiresome toil, foregathered the truths of justice which have made this nation beloved by a plain people.

In these humble surroundings events of great importance in the schooling of Lincoln to meet his fellowmen were to occur.

Lincoln took an early interest in citizenship. At New Salem on August 1, 1831, he cast his first vote. At the request of Mentor Graham, schoolmaster and clerk of the election, he was selected as an assistant. He had been in town less than a month.

Lincoln obtained most of his education in New Salem. Under the direction of Graham he learned grammar and mathematics. When the debating club was organized with James Rutledge as president, in

the winter of 1832, Lincoln became a leader. From the peculiar, unpractical genius and nature lover, Jack Kelso, he acquired a familiarity with Burns and Shakespeare. Within the cold and drafty cooper shop he studied surveying and law.

Traditions of how Lincoln began his law education have been handed down through generations at Petersburg. It was in the Watkins Pharmacy that I heard the story. Watkins' father was a chain-bearer for Lincoln when surveying and many of the Lincoln stories are retold in this apothecary's shop.

A mover, passing through New Salem, stopped in front of the Berry and Lincoln store. In his wagon there was a barrel which took up considerable room and which he asked Lincoln, who stepped to the door in answer to his call, if he would not buy. Lincoln had no use for the barrel, but following the kindly impulse of his nature, he purchased it for fifty cents and set it in a corner of the store. Some days later, noticing the barrel and being unemployed at the moment, he emptied the contents on the floor. Among them he found a complete copy of Blackstone's *Commentaries,* and at once he became absorbed in their study. In Lincoln's own words: "I began to read these famous works, and I had plenty of time; for during the long summer days, when the farmers were busy with their crops, my customers were few and far between. The more I read, the more intensely interested I became. Never in my whole life was my mind so thoroughly absorbed. I read until I devoured them."

But Lincoln was not always studious. He manifested his prowess as an athlete at New Salem. He was a good wrestler and the famous Armstrong-Lincoln

BLACK HAWK VIEWS HIS FORESTS

match occurred beside the Offut store. Its site is now marked by a large boulder. The boys from Clary Grove were sure Armstrong would win. When a foul was attempted Lincoln raised Armstrong above his head and tossed him to the ground. That was enough. From then on, the Clary boys were Lincoln's strongest supporters. They followed him into war and loyally supported him in his elections.

Lincoln went into the Black Hawk War in 1832 from New Salem. There was a contest over choosing a captain. Lincoln was a candidate. It was agreed that those willing to follow each leader should stand in line behind him. Lincoln's line was twice as long as his opponent's. Within one year in the village he had made many friends who recognized his leadership.

Lincoln took charge of his contingent at Beardstown on the Illinois river. The troops moved northward toward the Mississippi to Black Hawk's village; then up the Rock river valley to the Dixon blockhouse[1] through the scenic Oregon locality, enshrined with interest by Lorado Taft's idealistic statue of the Sauk chief which stands like a lonely sentinel on the cliffs, and down to Ottawa. There he re-enlisted to follow the trail to Galena and then northeastward to Whitewater, Wisconsin, where the quota was disbanded without experiencing any real fighting. Someone stole Lincoln's horse and he walked back to the Illinois river and then took a canoe to Havana, returning to New Salem after an absence of about three months. He plunged at once into a campaign for member of the legislature, to suffer in the fall of 1832 his first and only defeat by the votes of the people.

[1] Site one block from bridge across Rock river in Dixon.

But the Black Hawk War had made him acquainted with one man, Major John T. Stuart, who fired his ambitions. Stuart commended him to the study of law and five years later, when the New Salem days were over, made him law partner at Springfield.

In New Salem, Lincoln held his first federal office, serving as postmaster from May 7, 1833, until the office was discontinued on May 30, 1836. This was a job peculiarly to his liking. The uncalled-for papers he read carefully, and the rest of the mail he carried around in his hat until he met the person to whom the letter was addressed.

Lincoln's first business experience was acquired at New Salem. Starting as a clerk in Offut's store, he soon bought an interest with William F. Berry, and later by giving his notes acquired the stocks of other competitors. The ventures were disastrous and Lincoln narrowly avoided bankruptcy. While out of work he learned surveying within six weeks. So cautiously had he walked that in spite of financial misfortunes his honesty was sustained.

On one occasion, while keeping the Offut store, Lincoln found that in making change he had taken out six and one-fourth cents too much, and after closing that evening walked three miles to return the money. On another occasion he weighed out a half pound of tea the last thing before closing in the evening. In the morning he found a four-ounce weight on the scales, from which it occurred to him that his patron of the evening before had received four ounces less tea than she had paid for. So, weighing up this much tea, and closing the store, he hurried out to the lady's residence to correct the error. From these incidents and the fact

of his eminent fairness in refereeing village athletics and settling disputes and difficulties, he acquired the sobriquet of "Honest Abe," which followed him through the remainder of his life.

The survey which Lincoln made of the village of Petersburg illustrates his kindly disposition. Samuel L. Watkins, the local druggist, told me the story. After starting the work in February, 1836, Lincoln found that Jemima Elmore, the widow of an old friend who had been a member of his company in the Black Hawk War, had bought a little tract of land and built a home, where she lived with her children. Within the grounds to be surveyed, he found that if the streets ran straight north and south, a part of her house would be in the street. To save the house he set his compass to run south one degree east, and ran the cross streets at right angles to the north and south streets. One result of his "skewing" of the lines was that there was an irregular strip left on both the north and south sides of the town, the strip on the south being 37½ feet wide at the west end and 84½ feet wide at the east end.

Across the street from the Watkins store is the Menard county court house, and there the original Lincoln survey is on file showing the "skewed line." Also he gave the town its name after a decisive game of seven-up between Peter Lukins and George Warburton, founders of the site. Whether the town should be known as Georgetown or Petersburg was decided by the turn of one card.

Lincoln first became a candidate for political office in New Salem. Within a year after his arrival, he proclaimed himself as a candidate for the legislature. He carried New Salem and the Clary Grove district

by an almost unanimous vote, but was defeated in the other precincts. This first venture gave promise of his ultimate success, when he ran again, two, four, six and eight years after.

Lincoln acquired a first-hand knowledge of water navigation while he worked one summer around the Rutledge mill. The people of the community believed that their ultimate commercial prosperity depended upon the navigability of the Sangamon river. He piloted the steamer Talisman on its trip up and down the stream and made a legislative canvass on the strength of the issue that the river was navigable.

Lincoln demanded the utmost of courtesy and respect for ladies. Thomas P. Reep, a lawyer of Petersburg, who has spent over twenty-five years gathering local data on Lincoln and who is the author of *Lincoln at New Salem,* a valuable book issued by the Old Salem Lincoln League to acquaint visitors with every detail of Lincoln's life there, tells an authenticated story of how Lincoln cured a young man of swearing.

"One day while a partner with Berry in the store north of Main street, it is said, Lincoln was waiting on some ladies when a young man by the name of Charlie Reavis came in, and joining a group of friends sitting on a box in a corner of the store began telling a story, punctuating it with frequent oaths," related Mr. Reep. "It seems he had worked for a time on a river keel boat and had acquired the habit of swearing, so that he did it unconsciously, though very proficiently. Lincoln noticed that his lady customers were ill at ease and very much shocked, and that they hurried away as soon as their shopping was done.

OFFUT'S STORE

BERRY AND LINCOLN'S STORE

"As soon as they had gone Lincoln stepped over to Reavis and said:

" 'Charlie Reavis, I have spoken to you a number of times about swearing in this store in the presence of ladies and you have not heeded. Now I am going to rub the lesson in so that you will not forget again.'

"And thereupon he seized Reavis by the arm and led him out of the store to the side of the street where there was a patch of smart-weed. Throwing Reavis on his back and putting his foot on his breast, Lincoln grabbed a handful of these weeds and rubbed his face, mouth and eyes with them till he yelled for mercy and protested that if Lincoln would quit and let him up he would never swear again in the presence of ladies. But Lincoln told him that was not sufficient, he would have to promise to quit swearing altogether. To this Reavis agreed, and singular as it may seem, tradition has it that he kept the promise, soon after uniting with the Methodist Church under the preaching of Peter Cartwright and becoming an exemplary church member and citizen."

Stories about Lincoln at New Salem are many. Those who contemplate a visit to the place should read two books before going. Carefully study the recently issued booklet by Mr. Reep on *Lincoln at New Salem,* and take along a copy of the first volume of Herndon's *Life of Lincoln.* With them as companions the visit will be both profitable and memorable.

For lovers of Lincoln the New Salem life had more in it than the rigors of a stern college course. Living in that community were men like Dr. John Allen, the physician; Mentor Graham, the teacher; Bowling

Green, the justice of the peace; and many others whose characters and severe standards helped to fasten the mold of idealism about Lincoln. But the mold would have been but a cumbersome form had there not been a great personality with which it had to deal. The marvel of it all is that these hard conditions, the pinch of poverty, the menace of privation, never hardened him. Injustices of the world seem to have made him more patient, kindly and courageous.

"If the people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined," said Mr. Lincoln in his first announcement as a candidate for the legislature from the New Salem district. Lincoln thus reflected his own attitude better than could any volume psycho-analysing his ambitions.

But to all of these burdens was added still another, more sad and tragic than all the others combined. William H. Herndon, his later law partner for twenty years at Springfield, refers to it as "a romance of much reality the memory of which threw a melancholy shade over the remainder of his days." It is the piteous story of Ann Rutledge, daughter of the New Salem tavern-keeper; the beautiful, auburn-haired, sensitive girl, whom Lincoln wooed and won—only to have death take her from him.

Earlier in the New Salem days the girl had been betrothed to John McNeil, later in life known under his rightful name as John McNamar, the enterprising speculator, who made a small fortune at New Salem and left suddenly in July, 1832, to visit his family in Ohio, promising his sweetheart to send letters and re-

turn as soon as he could put his parents in easier circumstances.

With the coming of each mail the girl visited the postmaster to inquire for a letter. But no message ever came. Weeks and months passed. A friendship between Lincoln and the girl was ripening into love. One day the barrier of their fast friendship was removed. She had told Lincoln that she had been expecting a letter and he in reply asked if she wanted him to write to McNamar for her.

"No, he knows where I am, and if he does not care enough to write to me, I am sure I do not care enough about him to try and find him," Ann responded.

From that time on, Lincoln paid her ardent court. As they strolled over the hills and vales, attended Sunday school or lingered at the well by the Rutledge tavern, she came to realize her own love for the simple-hearted, great-souled man who sought her company. Happiness came into their lives with the mutual understanding. When the Rutledge family moved five miles into the country, in 1833, Lincoln's love followed. Now it is known that together they were planning to go to college, when at the age of 22 years she sickened of fever and died August 25, 1835.

Lincoln's grief seemed uncontrollable. He grew moody and spent much of his time in the woods or fields. He made a trip to Wisconsin and visited, it is claimed, Port Washington, where he contemplated opening a law office far away from the scene of the tragedy. But somehow he could not leave at once. In retrospect, Ann Rutledge filled his thoughts without ceasing, shutting out the natural concerns of an ambitious young barrister.

Many were the pilgrimages which Lincoln made to her grave.[1]

On one occasion he visited the Rutledge home in Concord and going into Ann's room was overcome with grief. Her mother comforted him and told him not to allow Ann's death to spoil his life, but to go on and fulfill the missions before him. The coming of the autumn winds and rains, the lightning and storm made his sorrow the more poignant.

"I am overcome with grief when I think of the storm and of the rain beating on her grave," he sobbed to his friend, William G. Green, one evening, shortly after her death, as the blustering wind beat the torrents upon the roof where they were staying.

Ann Rutledge was buried in Old Concord cemetery about five miles from her early New Salem home, but near the farm [2] where the Rutledge family were living at the time of her death. In 1890 her remains were removed to Oakland cemetery, southwest of Petersburg,

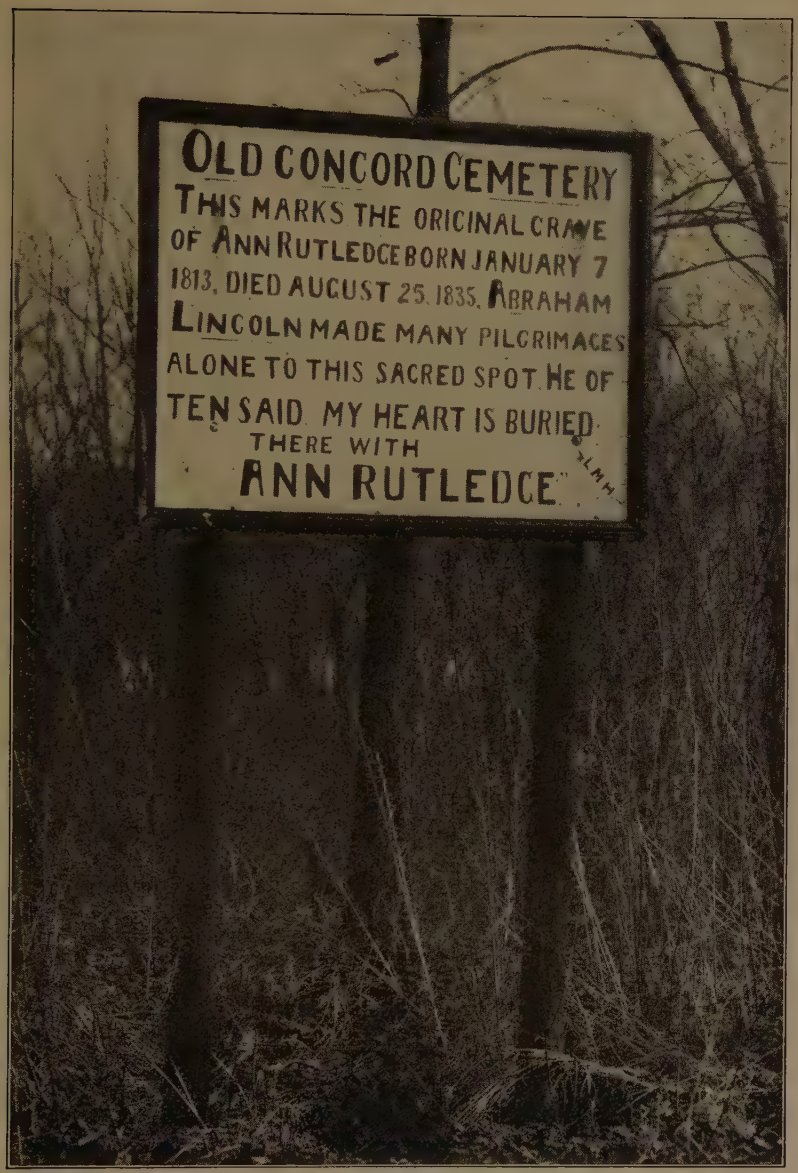
[1] There are two Concord cemeteries, about a half mile apart. Old Concord cemetery, where Ann Rutledge was first buried, is an acre of ground about three miles north of Petersburg on a rise of ground in a farm field, one mile to the left of the main highway. The place is a tangle of brush and blackberry bushes. The spot where her body rested until 1890 is marked as follows:

"This marks the original grave of Ann Rutledge, born Jan. 7, 1813, died Aug. 25, 1835. Abraham Lincoln made many pilgrimages alone to this sacred spot. He often said, 'My heart is buried there with Ann Rutledge.'"

One mile further on is the present Concord cemetery, with its church a crumbling ruin. In this cemetery is a stone which marks the grave of "John McNamar, died Feb. 22, 1879, aged 77 years, 11 mo."

[2] One-half mile on the same road after leaving the present Concord cemetery, four miles from Petersburg, is the Pantier school. The farm of David Harry Pantier, who acted as the writer's guide, adjoins. Half a mile north is the old John McNamar place, occupied by the Rutledge family at the time of Ann's death. A tablet beside the road reads:

"On this very spot stood the log cabin in which Ann Rutledge died, Aug. 25, 1835. On the hillside to the west stood a large oak tree under which Abraham Lincoln wept bitterly after leaving the sick room of Ann Rutledge, where their last communion was held."


OLD CONCORD CEMETERY
THIS MARKS THE ORICINAL CRAVE
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1813, DIED AUGUST 25, 1835. ABRAHAM
LINCOLN MADE MANY PILCRIMACES
ALONE TO THIS SACRED SPOT. HE OF
TEN SAID MY HEART IS BURIED
THERE WITH
ANN RUTLEDCE

FIRST GRAVE OF ANN RUTLEDGE

where in 1921 a large monument was erected by descendants of the old settlers of Menard county. On it is carved a passage referring to her, from Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*:

> OUT OF ME UNWORTHY AND UNKNOWN
> THE VIBRATIONS OF DEATHLESS MUSIC!
> "WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, WITH CHARITY
> FOR ALL."
>
> OUT OF ME FORGIVENESS OF MILLIONS TOWARD
> MILLIONS,
> AND THE BENEFICENT FACE OF A NATION
> SHINING WITH JUSTICE AND TRUTH.
>
> I AM ANN RUTLEDGE WHO SLEEP BENEATH THESE
> WEEDS,
> BELOVED OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
> WEDDED TO HIM, NOT THROUGH UNION
> BUT THROUGH SEPARATION.
> BLOOM FOREVER, O REPUBLIC,
> FROM THE DUST OF MY BOSOM!

While I stood beside the grave of Ann Rutledge and read these lines so charged with the history and struggles of this country to shake off slavery, a light snow was sifting through the air and the grave was wrapped in the dead leaves of autumn and early winter. I shuddered when I thought of the grief which this chilling blast would have caused the sensitive Lincoln. Away from her grave Lincoln had gone, a sad and melancholy soul; a world's mission before him. There was still work for him to do. As if marked by a shadowing fate, he and Dan Stone, fellow members, eighteen months later presented a joint memorial to the Illinois legislature in which Lincoln registered his honest conviction that "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." From that position he never receded.

Out of that idea, inspired with motives of justice,

imbued with the ideals of righteousness inculcated during his New Salem life, Lincoln went on to his destiny—a mission which led him to the presidential chair; to victory for his principles and to martyrdom.

And so today there rises at New Salem this unique memorial to share his immortality.

CHAPTER V

MAKING LAWS AT OLD VANDALIA

THE red brick court house at Vandalia, Illinois, tarnished outside by weather and age and worn shabby within by use and neglect, was the early political arena of Abraham Lincoln. It was built in 1836 by the people of Vandalia, who cherished the hope that by proffering it to the Illinois legislature as a state house they would retain the seat of government.[1] In the five winters spent at Vandalia by Lincoln as a legislator, his greatest single achievement was the announcement of his views on slavery, with which 90 per cent of the other members disagreed.

No one who visits Vandalia will have reason to think his time wasted. The old capitol is an antiquated landmark passed by Abraham Lincoln in his pathway to service. I first saw it in a late afternoon when a sun, gleaming from behind low, rose-tinted clouds, cast flashes which were reflected as red lights from its broad windows. It produced an illusion that made me think the candles for the opening of the Legislature of 1834 had just been lighted. That was the first session attended by Abraham Lincoln.

Somehow I came to like this plain, old-fashioned, two-story structure. It stands on an embankment above the sluggish Kaskaskia river in a park filled with trees.

[1] Tablet at entrance reads: "Vandalia, Capital of Illinois, 1819-1839. This building erected 1836."

The business section of a city of 3,500 has grown up about it. Near the entrance is a statue dedicated in 1928 to "The Madonna of the Trails," symbolic of the pioneer mothers who trudged westward with the tide of empire to this terminus of the old Cumberland road that was begun in Maryland in 1808 and completed here twenty years later.

Both the heroic figure of the woman with a child in her arms, with another clinging to her skirts, and the old state capitol, battered by time, radiate a wealth of historic tradition. Few changes have been made in the building since Lincoln's time. Iron pillars before the doorway replace the columns of brick. Soiled as it is within, I prefer its ruins to the parts reconstructed. One is history and the other is sham. The state has pursued a wise policy in voting to purchase it with its memories.[1]

Vandalia gains its impressiveness and grandeur in history from Abraham Lincoln, who, however, tore from its arms that which it longed to retain—the state capitol. What he said there eclipses the bruised feelings. Politics claimed him after his first year in Illinois. He made his first political speech at Decatur in 1830 and two years later at the age of twenty-three, after a nine-months' residence in New Salem, announced his candidacy for the legislature.

"Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition," declared Mr. Lincoln in a statement of his candidacy issued March 9, 1832. "Whether it be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed by my fellow-men by render-

[1] Fifty-first General Assembly of Illinois appropriated $60,000 for its purchase.

ing myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealth nor popular relations nor friends to recommend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the country; and, if elected, they will have conferred a favor upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate."

Three subjects discussed showed he had been thinking. He advocated internal improvements and river navigation; favored legislation against usury, and believed that the promotion of education was the most important need of the people.

Scarcely had he made his announcement than he enlisted to serve as a soldier in the Black Hawk War. Returning late in July he had little opportunity to make a canvass for the election, which occurred on August 6. He made two speeches. In the first, at Pappsville, following an auction, he paused long enough in his discussion to settle a fight that developed in the audience. The second was delivered at Springfield, in company with John T. Stuart. Out of 290 votes cast in New Salem, where he was known, he received all but thirteen; but he lost in the remainder of the district to the Reverend Peter Cartwright, the noted circuit-riding Methodist preacher. Never again was a direct vote of the people to turn Abraham Lincoln down.

Although he resumed the business of a storekeeper, the election had clearly demonstrated one thing that gave him encouragement. Where known, he was a vote-getter. And this despite the fact that he was an

advocate of Whig principles in a community that supported the democracy of Andrew Jackson. He planned to try again in two years.

No doubt his activities as postmaster of New Salem and services as deputy surveyor gave him favorable opportunities to extend his acquaintance. He again announced his candidacy in 1834; conducted a hand-shaking campaign over the district and was chosen by a large majority. This was the beginning of his official career.

There is a story current among the pioneer families of Petersburg, heir of New Salem's population, that Lincoln was worried for a time over the personal appearance that he might make at Vandalia. Thomas P. Reep, the inveterate investigator of reminiscences in that vicinity, told me of the outcome. Lincoln was advised to go to Coleman Smoot, a wealthy farmer, and borrow money.

"Smoot, did you vote for me?" asked Mr. Lincoln on approaching him.

"I sure did," responded the farmer.

"That makes you responsible. You must lend me $200 to buy clothing so that I will make a decent appearance at the legislature."

"I'll just do it," Smoot is said to have responded.

A few days later, the popular postmaster, dressed in a suit of butternut jeans, took the stage-coach for the two-day trip of seventy-five miles to the state capital.

Vandalia at the time was attempting to live up to the reputation enjoyed by other capitals of the country. It had a senate of 26, an assembly of 55, and a governor with an official staff. It was a town of less than one thousand inhabitants, with probably one hundred build-

ings, four taverns, two newspapers and several general stores. But it was the social center of the state, where men of wealth came as lobbyists and onlookers to view the legislature at work; where the daughters of well-to-do families came to visit friends and enter society. Compared with New Salem, his surroundings must have impressed Mr. Lincoln.

There was no act of Mr. Lincoln's at that session that gave any promise of a great future. He introduced a bill to curtail the powers enjoyed by justices of the peace, which was defeated, and another for a private toll bridge across Salt Creek in Sangamon county which was passed. But he met men who were to excite his ambitions, if not to help him.[1] Stephen T. Logan, who later took him into a law partnership, was there; Stephen A. Douglas was conducting his canvass for district attorney; and among other later notables were Governor Duncan, William L. D. Ewing, and Jesse K. Du Bois.

My tours to the haunts of Mr. Lincoln have impressed me with a singular fact. It seems to me that biographers have given too much attention to the accomplishments of Mr. Lincoln without pointing to the molding influences that produced the result. One of the distinctive characteristics of Mr. Lincoln was that he assimilated the knowledge of other men. He may not have had their opportunities, but he possessed a faculty of gaining from them knowledge which they had spent years in acquiring. Much of his early education was obtained in this way. From this attribute he gained strength. The methods employed and the courage

[1] Moore, Charles W., *Abraham Lincoln, Lawyer*, p. 494.

manifested in conducting his canvass for re-election to the legislature in 1836 disclose this development.

During the suffrage campaign of twenty years ago, one statement taken from his announcement as a candidate gave suffrage leaders consolation:

"I go for all sharing the privileges of government who assist in bearing its burdens. I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females)."

"When we were conducting our fights before the legislature for equal suffrage, I often quoted that statement," my traveling companion, a legislator and state official of many years' experience, told me while discussing Mr. Lincoln's political views during our Vandalia visit. "I think that single statement from Lincoln had more weight than all of the other arguments. He was an authority that could not be contradicted."

If any other document were needed to foreshadow the political sagacity of Mr. Lincoln, it was furnished during the campaign. I could understand how a man experienced in politics could have written to Col. Robert Allen the letter he did. But for a young man of twenty-seven to have issued such a document shows political growth and insight of high calibre.

It was while investigating some of the documents in the Lincoln tomb at Springfield that I first came across it. It appears that Mr. Allen was a Democratic candidate, and on a visit to New Salem where his brother was a physician, he intimated that if he told what he knew about Abe Lincoln and Ninian W. Edwards, both would be defeated. Such disclosures, however, he thought would not be fair. When this information came to Mr. Lincoln he was prompt to act:

"New Salem, June 21, 1836.

"Dear Colonel:

"I am told that during my absence last week you passed through the place and stated publicly that you were in possession of a fact or facts which, if known to the public, would entirely destroy the prospects of N. W. Edwards and myself at the ensuing election; but that through favor to us you would forbear to divulge them. No one has needed favors more than I, and generally few have been less unwilling to accept them; but in this case favor to me would be injustice to the public and therefore I must beg your pardon for declining it. That I once had the confidence of the people of Sangamon county is sufficiently evident; that if I have done anything, either by design or misadventure, which if known would subject me to a forfeiture of that confidence, he that knows of that thing and conceals it is a traitor to his country's interest.

"I find myself wholly unable to form any conjecture of what fact or facts, real or supposed, you spoke; but my opinion of your veracity will not permit me for a moment to doubt that you at least believed what you said. I am flattered with the personal regard you manifested for me; but I do hope on mature reflection you will view the public interest as a paramount consideration and therefore let the worst come.

"I assure you that the candid statement of facts on your part, however low it may sink me, shall never break the ties of personal friendship between us.

"I wish an answer to this, and you are at liberty to publish both if you choose.

"Very respectfully,

"Colonel Robert Allen." "A. Lincoln."

No response was received. It was during the canvass, however, that a platform incident arose that revealed Mr. Lincoln's sharp repartee, a peculiar characteristic that was to endear him to the people. A mass meeting was being held at Springfield, at which the candidates of the different parties spoke. George Forquer, a prominent Springfield lawyer, was a rival candidate of Mr. Lincoln. He had formerly been a Whig, but had changed his politics and had been appointed by the Democratic administration as register of the United States Land Office. Moreover, he was one of the first men in Springfield to attach a lightning rod to the chimney of his new home, an undertaking that was unique and considered an experiment at the time. Forquer took upon himself to reply to the speech of Mr. Lincoln. He attempted to belittle his opponent by ridiculing his youth and inexperience. Lincoln's reply was so appreciated by his audience that it resulted in the retirement of Mr. Forquer from politics.

"I am not so young in years as I am in the tricks and trade of the politician," replied Mr. Lincoln. "But whether I live long or die young, I would rather die now than change my politics for an office worth three thousand dollars a year, and have to erect a lightning rod over my house to protect my conscience from an offended God." [1]

That retort gave Mr. Lincoln more fame than any of his earlier speeches and he went back to Vandalia to the session that convened December, 1836, to be recognized as the leader among the Whigs. With him came that famous delegation of tall men, all over six

[1] Arnold, Isaac N., *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 46; Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, p. 92.

feet, from Sangamon county, who have come to be known by the sobriquet of the "Long Nine."

Consideration of three policies marked that session as one of the most important held in the state.[1] The legislature launched upon a policy of a $12,000,000 bond issue for internal improvements that almost bankrupted the commonwealth. In this Mr. Lincoln was a leader, aspiring to become the "Clinton of the West." The second was the consideration of memorials received from other states denouncing the activities of anti-slavery organizations. The third was the leadership by Mr. Lincoln by which the capital was removed to Springfield. It was to visit the scene of these remarkable endeavors that I went to Vandalia. One travels there from Springfield over a long "hard road" through a typical prairie country.

"Meetings of the legislature were held on the second floor," declared the clerk who took us through the building and up a stairway that creaks under one's tread. "The room is now used as a court room."

"There is a tradition that during one of the legislative fights, when the vote was close, Mr. Lincoln and one of his colleagues jumped from the second story window in order to break a quorum," he continued. I opened the window and looked down at the ground.[2]

"Lincoln must have had the agility of an athlete to have escaped without a broken leg in that performance," I commented. Our guide then told us that it was in this room that Lincoln took his first stand against slavery.

1 The most exhaustive presentation of this period of Mr. Lincoln's life will be found in Beveridge, *Ibid.*, 160-297. See also Whitney, *Lincoln*, Vol. I, pp. 122-150.

2 Herndon attributes this happening as occurring at Springfield. Tarbell thinks this conduct may have occurred twice.

For weeks the subject of abolition was intermittently debated. The whole ground of Southern opposition to the anti-slavery movement was earnestly discussed. Mr. Lincoln appears to have been an attentive listener, but when the resolution was adopted declaring the right of property in slaves to be "sacred to the slave-holding states by the Federal Constitution, and that they cannot be deprived of that right without their consent," Mr. Lincoln was one of six members voting in opposition.

That did not close the chapter. Six weeks later Dan Stone, a fellow member from Sangamon county, joined with him in a protest which declared that "slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." That statement was a foundation rock.

Standing in that little Fayette County court room at Vandalia, in a silence that was profound, I experienced a certain new light on the career of Abraham Lincoln. Within this high ceilinged meeting place, he had laid the first cornerstone expressing a view of slavery that was to expand with the passing years. Throughout the storm of civil strife that was gathering, this old building was to stand with its interesting traditions. It had listened to the protesting voice of Abraham Lincoln. He had become a spokesman on the slavery issue. The thought alone of visiting precincts so sacred, reading from resolutions written by hands that are stilled, and straining to catch the warning echo of a voice that has long gone, stirred the imagination.

The removal of the capital was to give him ephemeral fame, for which he was to be toasted by victors. Before the capital was to be formally removed he was to come again to attend other legislative gatherings,

but the session of 1836 marks a turning point in his career. His service in the meetings at Springfield in 1839 and 1840 was of little consequence.

"Lincoln with his 'Long Nine' did a lot of scheming and log rolling with the internal improvements bill to snatch the capital from Vandalia," said one of the county officials.

"He was never charged with employing unprofessional methods," I suggested.

"No. That's true. He was a shrewd legislator. Twice the proposal was defeated by its opponents, but Lincoln kept up the fight. The people of his district, which included Sangamon county, wanted the capital and he finally got it for them. In the closing days of the session the bill was passed. Springfield was so surprised by the victory that the offices were not moved for two more years. Even then the new capitol was not ready for occupancy."

What a wonderful pilgrimage this was! There is more in it than a trip to a decaying building. There is the majesty of epochs marshaling ennobling scenes; there is the charm which comes with understanding the glories of undaunted leadership. The dawn of faith which Lincoln held in freedom's charter is reincarnated in Vandalia's Old State House. Only by heroic devotion is ground dedicated to posterity.

CHAPTER VI

THREE LAW OFFICES IN SPRINGFIELD

FOR months I had planned by day and dreamed by night what a consummation of longing would come from a visit to Springfield, Illinois—Lincoln's manhood home. One would pass over ground that history had marked for its own; would feel the throb which comes from meeting a friend long known but never met; would sense perhaps that touch of silence and loneliness which must have marked Abraham Lincoln when he arrived there on a spring morning in March, 1837, on a borrowed horse with two old saddlebags holding all of his belongings, and seven dollars in his pocket, intent to carve his career as a country lawyer.

Nor was I disappointed. It was dark and the mists of spring hung in circles of yellow gossamer around the buzzing street lights. I was tired but I could not wait. I must go out and walk the damp streets and alleys; survey the buildings, and scan the threatening March sky which, in another March ninety years before, had meant so much in the life of the tall, gaunt young man of twenty-eight, troubled with misgivings on the threshold of an alluring profession.

Walking down the street toward the old Sangamon court house and square, which only a short time before Lincoln's coming had been selected as the site of the new state capitol by his decisive efforts as one of the "Long Nine" at Vandalia, I felt in my pocket

OFFICES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND STEPHEN T. LOGAN

FIRST COURT HOUSE OF LOGAN COUNTY

for a memorandum. I read it under the light of a huge electric "Welcome" sign which seems to shed both life and luster upon the somber, slate-colored, old state house:

THREE LINCOLN LAW OFFICES

John T. Stuart and Lincoln, April 27, 1837-April 14, 1841; 109 North Fifth Street. Building still standing. Marked by tablet.
Stephen T. Logan and Lincoln, April, 1841-1844. Southwest corner of Sixth and Adams, third floor. Building still standing. Tablet at Sixth Street entrance.
Abraham Lincoln and William H. Herndon, 1844, until "dissolved by bullet of John Wilkes Booth in 1865." New Myers building on site, corner Fifth and Washington Streets. On same location at earlier date stood Joshua Speed's store.

"Joshua Speed's," I repeated, and started to cross Fifth Street, where the store once stood. What a memory for the hand he gave to Lincoln! Lincoln had come into the city over the Old Salem road—now a trunk line over which one enters the outskirts beside a mammoth billboard fashioned in the form of an open book on whose pages stand these bold words:

WELCOME TO SPRINGFIELD
THE HOME OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Upon arriving in 1837 at Springfield, then a country town of 1,500 population with dirt streets and stone crosswalks, Lincoln had come to Speed's store to inquire the cost of blankets, bedding and furniture. He appeared sad, but said that if his experiment as a law-

yer was a success he would pay Speed by Christmas time.

"If I fail in this, I do not know that I can ever pay you," Lincoln dolefully commented.

"You seem to be so much pained at contracting a small debt," responded Speed, "I think I can suggest a plan by which you can avoid the debt and at the same time attain your end. I have a large room with a double bed upstairs, which you are very welcome to share with me."

"Where is your room?" asked Lincoln.

"Upstairs," and Speed pointed in the direction of the stairway.

Lincoln took his saddlebags on his arm, went upstairs, set his bags on the floor, and came down with a changed countenance.

"Well, Speed, I'm moved," he explained, beaming with pleasure.

Another early friendship helped Lincoln get started. During the Black Hawk War, Major John T. Stuart had urged the aspiring soldier to study law, and to assist him later loaned him books from his Springfield law office. More than three years passed. Then a record in the Circuit Court of Sangamon county, dated March 24, 1836, records that: "It is ordered by the court that it be certified that Abraham Lincoln is a person of good moral character." Six months later, September 9, 1836, the dockets of the Supreme Court of Illinois show that he was licensed to practice in all the courts of the state by the approval of two justices. He had passed his twenty-seventh birthday. On March 1, 1837, his name was entered by the clerk on the roll of attorneys, and on April 12, following, this profes-

sional card appeared in the *Sangamon Journal* of Springfield:

"J. T. Stuart, and A. Lincoln, attorneys and Counsellors at Law, will practice in the Courts of this Judicial Circuit—Office No. 4, Hoffman's Row, upstairs. Springfield, April 12, 1837."

Although long abandoned as a law office, the building where Stuart and Lincoln practiced is still standing. It has been considerably modified, but beside a bold confectionery sign there shines a bronze tablet summarizing the facts of this early partnership.

From the beginning Stuart was so engrossed in politics that he left most of the office work to Lincoln. There were no stenographers and typewriters in those days and all legal documents had to be drawn by hand. Lincoln performed this laborious pen-and-ink task without complaint. Until document thieves got busy at the different county seats in the old Eighth Circuit, the files of each were replete with a variety of legal papers in Lincoln's readable handwriting. Many specimens are still preserved.

Years later, when Herndon was a law partner of Lincoln he gave to Jesse W. Weik, of Greencastle, Indiana, joint author with Herndon of a life of Lincoln, the papers in the first suit in which Lincoln was retained. It was the case of Hawthorne *vs.* Woolridge, and involved three typical pioneer controversies—breach of contract, trespass, and replevin. The case was so long delayed that the parties finally settled without trial.

"One of the most courageous acts of Lincoln as a young lawyer was his exposé, in August, 1837, of Gen-

eral James Adams, a candidate for election as probate justice of the peace," a Springfield lawyer told me. "Before the election, unsigned handbills were circulated charging Adams with defrauding a widow of ten acres of land in Springfield by forging her name. When the issue was forced, Lincoln announced that he was both the attorney for the widow and the author of the handbill. Adams denounced Lincoln, accusing him of conspiracy. Lincoln replied that Adams' statements were as 'false as hell,' and to complete the exposure, published an indictment from Oswego, New York, issued in 1818, imputing to Adams a similar forgery. That ended the Adams controversy, but from that day clients demanding Lincoln's services increased. By this chivalrous act, he established himself with the people of Sangamon county."

Lincoln was neither precise nor methodical in the practice of law. He made memoranda on scraps of paper, and sometimes apologized for failure to answer letters by explaining that his correspondent's request had been overlooked after being placed in his hat. One packet of letters and papers tied with a string was found in his law office, after his death, labeled, "when you can't find it anywhere else look into this."

During the early years of his practice, Lincoln spent many evenings around the Speed store or at Diller's pharmacy. They were the "hangouts" for stories and political discussions. Either was a regular rendezvous for debate, and gave the participants an opportunity of developing their powers of logical reasoning. Other evenings were spent at the office of the clerk of the Supreme Court.

After the dissolution of the Stuart partnership, Lin-

coln was invited by Judge Stephen T. Logan, the recognized leader of the Springfield bar, to join in a firm. Lincoln accepted, and while the terms of the partnership are unknown, it was a real recognition of Lincoln's legal merits. No less than four United States Senators and three governors of states were developed in Logan's office in later years and their careers are a testimonial to Logan's ability to stimulate latent talent. A true disciple of Blackstone, Logan read his law commentaries at least once a year until he was sixty. Under such a tutelage Lincoln began to adopt his partner's methods, studying the facts and circumstances of his cases with the utmost care and diligently examining the reports for analagous situations.

In such a partnership Lincoln gave little attention to politics. In the December, 1841, term of the Illinois Supreme Court, he argued fourteen appeals and won ten, and during the terms of 1842-1843 he and his partner argued twenty-four appeals and won all but seven. In five years Lincoln came to a place among the leaders of the bar, judged by this record of success in the higher courts.

"He would study out his case and make about as much of it as any one," Logan remarked, speaking of his partner many years afterwards. "His ambition as a lawyer increased; he grew constantly. By close study of each case as it came up he got to be quite a formidable lawyer."

Logan's influence on Lincoln was pronounced. Probably no other lawyer in Illinois could have given Lincoln such a thorough legal training—a keenness which soon manifested itself when, after his election as President, he was called upon to solve intricate ques-

tions of law and to exercise diplomacy involving important rights of nations.

"Where is the old Logan-Lincoln law office?" I asked a good-natured policeman on the Adams Street corner.

"I'll show you, come with me. I have to point that place out a dozen times a day."

The building has withstood the elements of nearly ninety years. It is still occupied.[1] When Logan and Lincoln made their offices in the front rooms of the third floor of this building, it was new. Underneath were the rooms of the Supreme Court. To attend its semi-annual sessions many of the prominent lawyers of Illinois came. With them Lincoln made friends and legal connections, which brought him many cases while traveling the circuit. Throughout his nearly twenty-five years at the bar he always had a partner.

The same day that the partnership with Judge Logan was dissolved, Lincoln became the head of his own law firm, selecting as his partner the youthful William H. Herndon, a student in the Logan office. Herndon had many charming qualities and a good deal of independence. As a student in Jacksonville College, in southern Illinois, he had sympathized with the followers of Lovejoy, whose printing press had been thrown into the river at Alton when Lovejoy was murdered at the hands of a mob. Herndon's father, a pronounced slavery man, withdrew his son from college fearing that his mind might be poisoned by the abolition doctrines. But Herndon remained progressive in thought and it was this singular attribute which cemented Lincoln's friendship with him.

[1] Architect offices of S. J. Hanes and Murray S. Hanes.

Meantime, Lincoln's hankering for politics was again manifest. Two years after forming this partnership, in the fall of 1846, he was elected to Congress and served one term ending March 4, 1849. The two outstanding events in that period were Lincoln's determined opposition to the Administration's policy during the war with Mexico and the introduction of a bill, January 16, 1849, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. The bill was pigeon-holed by his colleagues and never reached the floor, but Lincoln had put himself on record espousing an issue that was soon to engulf all political parties. The great theme was germinating in his mind.

During Lincoln's absence, the partnership with Herndon was normally continued. With the close of Congress, Lincoln sought a federal land office appointment, and failing, returned to the law with a new determination. Grant Goodrich proposed a Chicago partnership with him in 1849, but Lincoln declined, fearing that he was susceptible to tuberculosis and that a too strict confinement to office work might impair his health.

In an autobiographical sketch written at Bloomington in 1858 for Jesse W. Fell, which has since become a much treasured Lincoln document, he said:

"In 1846, I was once elected to the lower house of Congress. Was not a candidate for re-election. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practiced law more assiduously than ever before."

These were the years when Lincoln made his great reputation on the Eighth Circuit. His legal work also carried him into other parts of the state, and recently

revealed court house records in Illinois disclose that he practiced some time in his career in forty-five counties.

During his practice he met as opponents some of the greatest lawyers of his time, among whom may be mentioned Jesse B. Thomas, O. H. Browning, Leonard Swett, Stephen T. Logan, Edward D. Baker, Elihu B. Washburne, Stephen A. Douglas, J. T. Stuart, Burton C. Cook, James A. McDougall (afterward a United States Senator from California), Lyman Trumbull, B. S. Edwards, Isaac G. Wilson, U. F. Linder, Thomas Campbell, Isaac N. Arnold, and many others whose names are impressed upon the jurisprudence of the state, and with all of whom he held the most cordial relations.

Judge Thomas Drummond of the United States District Court of Illinois has left a graphic characterization of Lincoln as a lawyer:

"Without any of the personal graces of the orator; without much in the outer man indicating superiority intellect; without great quickness of perception; still, his mind was so vigorous, his comprehension so exact and clear, and his judgment so sure that he easily mastered the intricacies of his profession and became one of the ablest reasoners and most impressive speakers at our bar. With a probity of character known by all; with an intuitive insight into the human heart; with a clearness of statement which was itself an argument; with uncommon power and felicity of illustration—often, it is true, of a plain and homely kind—and with that sincerity and earnestness of manner which carried conviction, he was perhaps one of the most successful lawyers we have ever had in the State."

A more personal delineation of his physical and courtly manners is preserved in *Recollections,* by Mrs. Jane Johns of Decatur, who knew Lincoln from his many visits to the Macon House, where she first lived on coming to Decatur. She says:

"When I first knew Lincoln, the ungainliness of the pioneer, if he ever had it, had worn off and his manner was that of a gentleman of the old school, unaffected, unostentatious, who 'arose at once when a lady entered the room, and whose courtly manners would put to shame the easy-going indifference to etiquette which marks the twentieth century gentleman.'

"His dress, like his manner, was suited to the occasion, but was evidently a subject to which he gave little thought. It was certainly unmarked by any notable peculiarity. It was the fashion of the day for men to wear large shawls, and Mr. Lincoln's shawl, very large, very soft, and very fine, is the only article of his dress that has left the faintest impression on my memory."

Lincoln's fees were modest. During one year of his partnership with Stuart there were two or three fees of $50, but most of the entries were for $5. Day book entries in one hundred eighty-two cases, while practicing with Herndon, disclose one fee of $2.50; two of $3.00; sixty-four of $5; five of $7; sixty-three of $10; five of $150; one of $100, and others ranging from $15 to $25.

The highest fee collected during his more than twenty years of practice was $5,000. Lincoln had appeared for the Illinois Central Railroad in a case at Bloomington and won. He went to Chicago and presented a bill of $2,000.

"Why," said the official in astonishment, "this is as much as a first-class lawyer would have charged."

Lincoln was depressed by the rebuff. When his lawyer friends learned the facts, six of the leading practitioners of the state persuaded him to raise the fee to $5,000 and sue in the courts to collect it. He did so and obtained a verdict. In all of his life as a lawyer he opposed "sharp practices" and opportunities to promote litigation. Scores of letters reveal this singular characteristic—an attribute as uncommon in Lincoln's time as it is among lawyers today.

"Discourage litigation," was Lincoln's advice to lawyers. "Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often the real loser—in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of becoming a good man. There will always be enough business. Never stir up litigation. A worse man can scarcely be found than one who does this. Who can be more nearly a fiend than he who habitually overhauls the register of deeds in search of defects in titles, whereon to stir up strife and put money in his pocket? A moral tone ought to be infused into the profession which should drive such men out of it."

The day following my evening visit to the haunts of Lincoln, the lawyer, I again returned to the Sangamon Court House Square, then to learn how cherished the memory of Lincoln still is with all classes of people. I saw an eager group of children, in charge of their teacher, go from place to place reading in tabloid form the simple stories of Lincoln in Springfield. Gold-lettered window signs of other lawyers in modern offices

OLD STATE CAPITOL, VANDALIA

STATE CAPITOL, NOW SANGAMON COURT HOUSE

glistened in the sunlight as it beat down and shimmered on the high brick buildings. Springfield has changed since Lincoln's day, but a visit dispels the false halo and gives the seeker a true picture of a simple man grown great because he lived without pretense or sham.

Watching the interest and enthusiasm of these youthful pilgrims, who like me sought inspiration in these hallowed places, I visioned the little office of Lincoln and Herndon on the second floor of the old building where the resplendent Myers structure now stands; a room as modest as the fees charged; a table in the center with an old sofa on one side; a wood-burning stove and four or five chairs and a bookcase containing twenty or more volumes opposite.

Before a desk at the far end of the room sat a tall, smooth-shaven man with face a yellowish-brown, clothed in a black suit, stove-pipe hat upturned on the table, which was littered to confusion with papers. Abraham Lincoln, the country lawyer, had just returned to his office from a long trip around the old Eighth Circuit.

CHAPTER VII

AN ECHO IN THE OLD HALLS OF CONGRESS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN made his first trip East in the autumn of 1847. The journey was up the Ohio river to Pittsburgh, and then by rail to Baltimore and Washington.[1] Many travelers of that day went by way of the Great Lakes or over the old Cumberland road, the scene of so many political triumphs, but a love for the Ohio from boyhood doubtless settled the route with Lincoln. He went to attend a session of Congress as the only Whig representative from Illinois. Six weeks before the opening, accompanied by Mrs. Lincoln and Robert, now six years old, he left Springfield by stage for St. Louis to take passage by boat. On the way they spent some time with Mr. Lincoln's old friend and benefactor, Joshua Speed, who six years before had closed out his store business in Springfield and returned to his father's estate, "Farmington." Five years had passed since Lincoln's last visit to that impressive, red brick manor five miles from Louisville, Kentucky. Before proceeding, they visited with Mrs. Lincoln's people, the Todd family, at Lexington.

Even at the present day, when progress and invention have annihilated distance and brought near the world's wonders, a trip on the winding Ohio is one to contemplate. There is no more historic way into the

[1] Beveridge, Albert J., *Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, p. 398. This volume contains the most complete presentation of Lincoln's congressional record.

heart of the continent. Each ferry is a landmark, and as I threaded upstream for miles I lost my alarm over swishing waters and found confidence in the rhythm of the river's unending story. Over it French and Indian traders had quarreled for supremacy; to protect its source the British government in 1755 sent General Edward Braddock on his ill-fated expedition; Boone and Washington had surveyed rich lands along its banks; down its forest-shaded route in 1779 went George Rogers Clark to claim the Northwest at Vincennes for the American cause; following came Revolutionary soldiers to found "the Plymouth Rock of the West" at Marietta, Ohio; in mystery Aaron Burr arrived in 1805 at Blennerhassett's Island with his schemes of a southwestern empire; and then breaking the bounds, there pushed a resistless tide of immigrants from the Atlantic coast and every country of Europe.[1] What panoramas of history must have unfolded to Mr. Lincoln as he sat on the deck witnessing the receding places where occurred so many stirring events!

Probably few on board knew or understood the history and voice of the great river better than he. For months as a boy he had watched, at Rockport, Indiana, the commerce of the interior move joyously off on its bosom; from travelers many times he had heard the glowing story of the river's past, and then in 1828, like a day of dreams he had gone away on its surface to New Orleans for his first glimpse of the world. Now he returned over it through a realm of changing vistas and to a destiny that was to make its impress on the history of nations.

[1] For history of the Ohio river, see Reuben Gold Thwaites' *Afloat on the Ohio.*

Politics had a peculiar fascination for Mr. Lincoln. After serving four terms in the lower house of the state legislature, nothing was more natural than that he should aspire in the spring of 1843 to a seat in Congress. Edward D. Baker and John J. Hardin were also aggressive. The Whig convention named Mr. Hardin, but a gentleman's agreement seems to have been reached under which Hardin would retire after one term to be followed by Lincoln and then by Judge Stephen T. Logan, his former law partner.

Throughout 1845 and the spring of 1846, Lincoln was diligent in canvassing for votes. As agreed, Hardin withdrew and Mr. Lincoln was then nominated by a Whig convention. The Democrats selected the Reverend Peter Cartwright, circuit-riding evangelist and Methodist minister, who had defeated Lincoln in 1832 as a candidate for the state legislature. He was a most formidable opponent, forceful, energetic and popular. For years he had preached over the district and during his life is said to have delivered more than 18,000 sermons.

One incident of the campaign is recorded. People of Springfield are fond to relate the story of a revival conducted by the Reverend Mr. Cartwright during the canvass. Lincoln went to get a view of his opponent in action, taking a seat in the rear. At the close of a regular camp-meeting sermon the evangelist called upon all who expected to go to heaven to rise. All got up except Lincoln. After the audience was seated again he called on all who expected to go to hell to rise. Lincoln still remained seated. The preacher was not to be outwitted. He paused a few moments and faced

his political opponent. The congregation was aware of a tense situation.

"I should like to inquire of Mr. Lincoln, where he expects to go?"

Drawing himself up slowly Mr. Lincoln said that he had not intended to participate in the service, but since the question had been asked he would answer it.

"I expect to go to Congress," he responded.

Lincoln was elected in August, 1846, but under the Constitution could not take his seat until December, 1847. Responding to the editor of the *Congressional Directory* for information about his life, in his own handwriting, he furnished an autobiography unique in political records for its brevity:

"Born February 12, 1809, in Hardin county, Kentucky.

Education defective.

Profession, Law.

Military service, Captain of Volunteers in Black Hawk War.

Offices held: Postmaster at a very small office, four times a member of the Illinois Legislature, and elected to the Lower House of the next Congress."

In the interval before taking his seat, he made his first trip to Chicago to attend a meeting of the Rivers and Harbors convention of 1847 called to further internal improvements.[1] There for the first time he met Horace Greeley of *The New York Tribune;* Thurlow Weed of *The Albany Journal,* and Edward Bates of Missouri, who was to become attorney-general in his

[1] Rice, Allen T., *Reminiscences of Lincoln,* p. 16; Tarbell, *Footprints,* pp. 273-278.

cabinet—three men who were to play large roles in the nation's future and in Lincoln's career. Out of that convention came to Mr. Lincoln the conviction that Illinois might share a more prominent place in the sisterhood of states.

Three months later he started east. The Washington which Lincoln saw on his coming to attend the session of Congress had little resemblance to the city of today. The pioneer village has turned metropolitan. Only with difficulty was I able to locate some of the landmarks. Pennsylvania Avenue, that "Appian Way" which links the Capitol with the White House, was then a rough road of cobblestones; houses were of frame and far apart; wells were the source of water supply; nearly every home had its own garden and the keeping of domestic fowls was common. Hotels were crowded, but were used by transients; most members of Congress lived in boarding houses.

"Mrs. Spriggs' boarding house where Mr. Lincoln resided stood on about the site of the Fountain of Neptune at the entrance of the Congressional Library," a scholarly secretary to one of the senators, schooled in Washington history, imparted, while we went about searching out the old Lincoln haunts. "Mrs. Lincoln and her son remained in Washington about three months, when they returned for a visit to her home in Kentucky. Everybody liked the Lincolns, and especially Mr. Lincoln, because of his good nature and the humor of his stories."

"Did you ever hear what he did in the evenings after the return of Mrs. Lincoln to the West?" I inquired.

"Most of his evenings were spent bowling in an alley near the Spriggs boarding house," replied my compan-

ion. "He wasn't much of a bowler, but his quaint remarks while awkwardly spinning the ball always attracted a good crowd."

As we crossed the lawn and approached the east entrance of the imposing national Capitol, I was reminded that the expansive wings used by the present Senate and House had been built since Mr. Lincoln's service in Congress. The Capitol in 1848 was surmounted by a wooden dome; the Senate then held its meetings in the rooms now occupied by the Supreme Court and the House members convened in the chamber which has since been converted into Statuary Hall.

There have been few changes in the architecture of the old House meeting-place. The woodpaneling appears antique; the galleries, where an eager public gathered to listen to the stormy debates over the extension of slavery and the war with Mexico, seem dark and cramped; a dull light filters into the semi-circular room where once stood the seats for the members; a line of men and women—prophets, heroes and statesmen—who have made American history, some in marble and others in bronze, are arrayed about the outer wall. Here Lincoln frequently attended religious services during the Civil War, when the churches in Washington were given over to sick and wounded soldiers. A peculiarity in the acoustics makes one's voice echo in the silent chamber as though the place were haunted by the tones and ghosts of a great past.

Far to the rear of the chamber, in the last row on the Whig side to the left of the Speaker, was Mr. Lincoln's seat. Not far away in the rotunda, placed there by order of Congress,[1] stands his statue, fashioned by Vin-

[1] Fairman, Charles E., *Art and Artists of the Capitol*, p. 235.

nie Ream of Wisconsin, who had known Mr. Lincoln. Surrounding him in the assemblage were some of the notable men of the time. In the Speaker's chair sat Robert C. Winthrop of Massachusetts; George Ashmun of Massachusetts, who twelve years later was to preside over the Chicago convention that nominated Lincoln for President, had a seat to the right; the fiery anti-slavery leaders, Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, and Caleb B. Smith of Indiana, had places nearby. The South had in its delegations Robert B. Rhett of South Carolina, a brilliant slavery advocate; Robert Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens from Georgia, both to become distinguished as leaders in the Confederacy. David Wilmot, author of a much-heralded plan for which Lincoln voted nearly a score of times to check the expansion of slavery, represented Pennsylvania.

Across the hall in the Senate were Douglas, Calhoun, Chittenden, Benton, Cass, John A. Dix, Simon Cameron, Webster, and Jefferson Davis, the latter to become President of the Confederacy. Already the political forces and the outstanding leaders in the war to come over the Union were in training—Jefferson Davis in the Senate from Mississippi and Lincoln in the House from Illinois.

Standing in this gallery of the renowned, one almost feels the shock of grief that must have swept the chamber on February 21, 1848, six weeks after Mr. Lincoln arrived, when former President John Quincy Adams, at eighty-two, was stricken by death. A tablet in the floor marks the spot where fell the venerable leader. Mr. Lincoln was a member of the committee in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Records at the capital show Mr. Lincoln was punc-

tual in attendance. When the House was not in session he loitered about the House post-office telling stories and making friends. His sagacity was quickly recognized by Whigs who encouraged his advance. Daniel Webster invited him to his morning breakfasts and the leaders listened to his counsel.

Shortly after taking his seat, Lincoln offered, on December 22, 1847, the famous "Spot Resolutions" calling upon President Polk to designate "the spot" where American soil had been invaded by Mexico. It was a bold and daring move to oppose the administration at such a time. His opposition to the war was not popular with his constituents. But Lincoln claimed the lone right of Congress to make war and defended his resolution in a lengthy speech on January 12, 1848. Writing to a friend who had objected to his criticism of Polk in relation to this power of the President in war, Lincoln said:

"The provision of the Constitution giving the war-making power to Congress was dictated, as I understand it, by the following reasons: Kings had always been involving and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally, if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This our Convention understood to be the most oppressive of all kingly oppressions, and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that no man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us. But your view destroys the whole matter, and places our President where kings have always stood."

In this first speech some of the remarks made by Mr. Lincoln over the Mexican war were to be fre-

quently quoted, to his discomfort, when he became the war President in 1861 with a fault-finding Congress on his hands.

Even while criticising he voted for war loans and army appropriation bills. He wanted the soldiers to have every resource and comfort. At home William H. Herndon, his law partner, was kept busy explaining Lincoln's attitude. Two years later his hostile position contributed to the defeat of Logan, who had been selected to succeed him in Congress. But Lincoln believed he was right and never recanted. Popular clamor at home did not turn him aside. The courage which was to sustain him in more trying times was already manifest.

If one takes the opportunity to read the legends on the statues while visiting the hall where Congressman Lincoln spoke and voted, he will be struck by the fact that many notables knew him. They remain in his company now dressed in solemn garb like attendants at some momentous event. James Shields, with whom he once planned a duel, is there representing Illinois as officer and statesman; Lew Wallace, author and soldier, is there from Indiana; Frances P. Blair and Thomas H. Benton are his friends from Missouri; Daniel Webster, who hired him as a lawyer in settling Illinois land deals, only to chide him when he came to Congress because of the small fee he charged, upholds the honor of his natal state, New Hampshire; Calhoun is there from South Carolina and Robert E. Lee from Virginia. Several of these were his friends while serving in Congress.

Daily attention to his duties made Lincoln intimate with most of the members serving in both the Senate

and House. Only for a few days before the adjournment of Congress in August was he absent. In June he attended the Whig National Convention at Philadelphia. He favored General Zachary Taylor for President. After the nomination he became politically active. He made a speech in Congress ridiculing the war record of General Lewis Cass, the Democratic nominee, comparing it humorously with his own service in the Black Hawk War.

"If General Cass went in advance of me picking whortleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges on the wild onions," laughed Mr. Lincoln. "If he saw any live, fighting Indians, it was more than I did, but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry. If ever I should conclude to doff whatever our Democratic friends may suppose there is of black-cockade Federalism about me, and thereupon they shall take me up as their candidate for the Presidency, I protest that they shall not make fun of me, as they have of General Cass, by attempting to write me into a military hero."

Lincoln sent letters to his friends in Illinois, urging them to do all possible to perfect local Whig organizations. To aid the cause, he consented to become a Whig presidential elector in Illinois.

Leaving the old hall of the House of Representatives, we strolled around the walks at the rear of the Capitol. The Washington monument, like a silver needle, pierced the skyline at the end of the mall which leads toward the Potomac. I was thinking of Lincoln, and somehow the scene suggested an idea.

"The cornerstone of that monument was laid on

July 4, 1848, while Mr. Lincoln was still here at the session. Is it not possible that he attended the ceremonies, which were so imposing?" I inquired.

"His name is not among the guests, but he may have been present with other members of Congress as a spectator," my companion responded. "The monument was slow to rise and it was not completed until he had been dead nearly twenty years."

Instinctively we started in the direction of the Washington memorial. Walking along, we recalled that at the close of the session Mr. Lincoln's intense interest in the success of the Whig national ticket took him on a New England speaking tour for his party and finally to Boston, where he met Governor William H. Seward of New York, who spoke from the same platform. It was his first acquaintance with the man who was to become his Secretary of State.

"I reckon you are right," he told Mr. Seward after hearing his speech. "We have got to deal with this slavery question, and got to give much more attention to it hereafter than we have been doing." [1]

On his way home he was joined by Mrs. Lincoln and together they visited Niagara Falls.

"The thing that struck me most forcibly when I saw the Falls was where in the world did all that water come from," he told his law partner, Herndon, upon his return home from Chicago [2] where, on October 6, 1848, he addressed a large audience in the public square.

Soon our rambles had taken us to the National Museum where in one of the show cases is exhibited the

[1] *Memoirs of Seward*, pp. 79-80.
[2] Barton, W. E., *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. I, p. 291.

model of Lincoln's boat invention, upon which he obtained a patent in 1849. The mechanism was designed as a means for transporting vessels over shoals and snags.[1] The crude affair was evidently made from a shingle or cigar-box and the rough workmanship showed that sharp-edged tools for shaping the twenty-inch model must have been scarce in those days.

"It was in the vicinity south of this institution that the slave market was held, and gangs of negroes in chains were a common sight on the streets while Lincoln was a member of Congress," [2] one of the attendants remarked when he learned of our interest in Lincoln.

"Did he know about it?"

"It stirred him so deeply with shame to think the bartering in human flesh could go on in the shadow of the Capitol that upon his return to attend the short session in December, 1848, he introduced a resolution for the freeing of all slaves in the District of Columbia. It was his most noteworthy effort in Congress, but he was unable to bring his measure to a vote before the session closed."

The career of Lincoln in Congress was at an end. Failing in his efforts to obtain an attractive political appointment, he reluctantly returned to Springfield to resume the practice of law. The greatest opportunities of his legal career awaited his talents.

[1] The Patent Office model by Abraham Lincoln is in the north hall of the Arts and Industries Building of the United States National Museum.

[2] Ten years later in one of Lincoln's speeches during the debates with Douglas he described the slave shambles at Washington and said: "In view from the windows of the Capitol a sort of a Negro livery stable, where droves of Negroes were collected, temporarily kept, and finally taken to Southern markets, precisely like droves of horses, has been openly maintained for more than fifty years." A yellow house south of the Smithsonian Institution was the slave market. See Nicolay, Helen, *Our Capitol on the Potomac*, p. 349.

CHAPTER VIII

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN TRAVELED THIS WAY, 1847-1857"

THE Metamora court house in Illinois, another shrine to Abraham Lincoln, the lawyer-story-teller of the old Eighth Circuit, was reached over a winding dirt road that was soft and slippery after the night's rain. Spring was waning into summer and the countryside was plushy with its promising crops of grass and grains. From the roadside ascended the bobolink to pour forth his liquid melody from mid-air. The aroma of stirred land, a swollen brook that crossed the way, tree shade for cattle by the line fences, and a warm sunlight calling the budding world to arise, made the twenty-five miles from Peoria seem as if the country were celebrating in a glorifying symphony its centuries of life.

Abraham Lincoln reasoned out his law cases and cogitated his theories of government while traveling this way as an itinerant lawyer. Metamora is a quiet country town where every home has its lettuce bed and flower garden. It appeared so neighborly that I wondered if its spirit of peace did not prompt the removal of the county seat to Eureka in 1896, leaving the state to re-dedicate the building as a Lincoln memorial.

Methods of practicing law have changed since Mr. Lincoln's day. Then each judge presided successively over court in a dozen or more counties. Sessions lasted from three days to two weeks, and the lawyers moved

TRAIL MARKER ON THE OLD EIGHTH CIRCUIT

with the judges, expecting to be hired by some litigant on arriving at the county seat. Twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, the legal cavalcade traveled the circuit—a route of three hundred miles.

Abraham Lincoln spent six months of each year during the last ten years of his practice in this peregrinative occupation. Not all lawyers followed the custom. Some went only to adjoining counties. Mr. Lincoln was the only member of the bar who year after year made the entire trip with the judge.[1] His long absences from his Springfield office may account for the fact that he never practiced law without a partner, for he seldom returned for a week-end.

One who tours the circuit today over highways of cement, crossing and re-crossing the marked trail roads followed by judges and lawyers, and who talks with the people at the way places and the new court houses, soon becomes cognizant that Mr. Lincoln's legal career falls into two periods—divided by a term in Congress in 1847. It is only of the second that one discovers a wealth of family traditions and official records. Throughout, Springfield remained the center of his activity.

During the first period he practiced law with John T. Stuart and later with Judge Stephen T. Logan, both of whom were senior partners who kept him at work in the office or in the adjoining counties. At the close of his career in Congress he would gladly have given up Blackstone for a public job, but when he failed of an appointment as Commissioner of the General Land Office in 1848, he returned to the law with

[1] Hill, Frederick Trevor, *Lincoln the Lawyer*, p. 167; Whitney, Henry C., *Lincoln*, Vol. I, p. 188.

determination and began to ride the circuit. On these trips he met and impressed the men who later joined with him in founding the Republican party in Illinois. These same persistent, enthusiastic men went for him to the Chicago convention and by ardor and strategy secured his nomination for President. Life on the circuit had been the school that graduated statesmen—not one but several.

The old Eighth Circuit of Illinois has no counterpart in the history of the American bar. Its area varied at different periods and for a time in his career Lincoln practiced rather continuously in seventeen counties. At each of these county seats has been erected a thick granite slab four feet high,[1] to which a bronze plaque is attached, presenting his profile with these words:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
TRAVELED THIS WAY AS HE RODE THE
CIRCUIT OF THE
EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT, 1847-1859.

In 1849, when Mr. Lincoln was returning with a zest to the law, the Eighth Circuit was composed of fourteen counties—Sangamon, Tazewell, Woodford, McLean, Logan, De Witt, Piatt, Champaign, Vermillion, Edgar, Shelby, Moultrie, Macon and Christian, —the whole east central part of the state, from the Illinois river to the Indiana line. There was one judge.

[1] County seats marked with Lincoln circuit tablets are:

Springfield (Sangamon Co.)	Pekin (Tazewell Co.)
Metamora (Woodford Co.)	Bloomington (McLean Co.)
Lincoln (Logan Co.)	Mt. Pulaski (Logan Co.)
Clinton (De Witt Co.)	Monticello (Piatt Co.)
Urbana (Champaign Co.)	Danville (Vermillion Co.)
Paris (Edgar Co.)	Charleston (Coles Co.)
Shelbyville (Shelby Co.)	Sullivan (Moultrie Co.)
Decatur (Macon Co.)	Taylorville (Christian Co.)
Petersburg (Menard Co.)	Havana (Mason Co.)

Now more than thirty handle the legal business of the same territory.

Only by a trip around the circuit does the spirit of pioneer life that nurtured such men reveal its place in a realistic picture. County seats then contained a population of from 500 to 1,000. Some of the court houses and many of the jails were log structures. The same county seats now have populations of from 5,000 to 75,000 and possess attractive, modern buildings. There are nearly five times as many people in Chicago alone as were domiciled in Illinois when Mr. Lincoln was making his record at the bar.

"The settlements in the country skirted along the timber," wrote Leonard Swett, one of the last survivors of the Lincoln Circuit group, "the streams were without bridges, and the prairies were wholly unsettled. Dirt roads or trails extended from one county seat to another, and the ordinary mode of travel was on horseback or, occasionally, in a buggy."

Necessity called lawyers to the circuit that they might make a living in their profession. Few of the smaller places could support an attorney. Practicing law then resolved itself into a matter of logic, a reasoning from fundamental principles because of the dearth of authorities. Young men found it difficult to get started because the public preferred to hire leaders on the circuit in contested cases. A pioneer legal tournament was a matching of wits; not an assembling of precedents.

Abraham Lincoln enjoyed the circuit practice. He liked the variety of cases, the increasing numbers of people who met him, the freedom of open country, and

the time to brood. He reveled in the problems that called for reasoning in their solution.

"Wait until I fix this plug for my gallus, and I will pitch into that like a dog at a root," he told Laurence Weldon, who approached him with a paper he did not understand.

The circuit gave him a chance to talk politics; an opportunity to study the minds of the many. He was completing his schooling in human understanding for a great career of which no shadow as yet gave him warning.

During most of Lincoln's circuit career, Judge David Davis, later appointed by him to the Supreme bench of the United States, was the trial judge. A mountain of a man physically, Judge Davis was a keen lawyer, positive in his opinions and quick of decision. He personally knew a large portion of the people of the circuit. Among lawyers Lincoln seemed to be his favorite, although no one has ever hinted that Lincoln gained any advantage because of his friendship. They traveled the circuit together; they ate at the same hotel table; sometimes they slept in the same bed and used their room evenings as a gathering place for the telling of stories.

"Where is Lincoln?" the judge would ask if he did not come to the room promptly after supper. If the absence was prolonged, he would send a fellow lawyer to search for him, for Lincoln's stories were a delight. Lincoln was at his best in the company of men. The portly sides of the judge would shake with laughter, tears would roll down his cheeks, and the sound of his convulsed voice would reach the corridors, while Lincoln sat in the center of the group philosophizing

through anecdotes and parables. If someone came to the door, one of the other lawyers would be sent into the hall, and then the judge would urge Lincoln to proceed. He was always impatient until the end was reached.

"Well! Well! Mr. Lincoln, what next?" the Judge would exclaim when the hearty peals subsided, "can't you tell just one more?"

Through this form of jovial entertainment, Lincoln trained his powers to win and impress men with words.

This intimate acquaintance with the judge may have brought Lincoln an increasing business. But in the trial of a suit, as many quips from the bench fell in Mr. Lincoln's direction as in any other. There was no partiality.

Semi-annual assembling of the court at one of the county seats was more than a legal event. It was a holiday for the community; the one place of amusement for country people. Families that had not been in town for months came on that occasion. These meetings became educational gatherings, with speeches by the lawyers in the evenings on political subjects and a general dissemination of the news.

After I began my tour, I was happy that I had read several accounts of Abraham Lincoln and the old Eighth Circuit.[1] At all of the county seats are descendants of the pioneers, who are as conversant with

[1] For descriptions of Lincoln and the old Eighth Circuit, see: Whitney, Henry C., *Lincoln,* Vol. I, pp. 172-200; Hill, Frederick Trevor, *Lincoln, the Lawyer;* Richards, John T., *Abraham Lincoln, the Lawyer Statesman;* Moores, Charles W., *Abraham Lincoln, Lawyer,* (Indiana Historical Society); Weik, Jesse W., *The Real Lincoln,* pp. 127-214; Tarbell, Ida M., *In the Footsteps of the Lincolns,* pp. 292-320; Starr, Jr., John W., *Lincoln and the Railroads,* pp. 57-130.

the reminiscences of their fathers as if Mr. Lincoln had ridden down the circuit only yesterday.

"Under the shades of these trees in the park before the court house, many of the lawyers consulted with their clients," said an old resident of Metamora. "The lawyers delivered addresses on political questions while awaiting the calling of cases in which they were to participate."

The second story of the court house where the sessions were held has been transformed into a museum. There is the bar of the court before which the lawyers argued, I was told. The long wooden benches repose in the corner.

Citizens of Metamora were positive in their stories that in addition to acting as a lawyer, Lincoln had at times performed the duties of a judge. The traditions are probably true. There are several instances at other places on the circuit, where other lawyers acted in a judicial capacity.

"Mr. Lincoln became acquainted with the great men of this state on his circuit visits," explained the old court house custodian. "These were the men who came to appreciate his worth and later to promote his ambitions. There were times when Abraham Lincoln, Adlai Stevenson, Judge David Davis, and Robert G. Ingersoll all met under the roof of this building, not only once, but many times. No one would have believed at that time that, within the walls of this unpretentious structure, there were assembled a future President and Vice-President, a future judge of the highest tribunal in the world, and the greatest orator of his age. Yet this all proved to be true. The circuit

called men into development and gave them a chance to know each other and to measure abilities."

Sometimes it took days for the peripatetic court to move from one county seat to another—a distance now traveled in an hour or two. Railroads did not come into use in Illinois until 1854, and the trips were made either on horseback or with buggy. Improvement of the highways early in the fifties encouraged Lincoln to buy a "pokey" horse and a "rattling" buggy. The legal retinue moved along the rutted ways, singing songs, finding topics for humor in the grotesque, wind-blown garments that danced on clothes lines; stopping to talk to the farmers and noting the improvements that had been made since the last visit. Early in February the perambulating court began its tour. The fall trip was started in September and ended before Christmas.[1]

The whole district that required a month for them to traverse can now be made in two days, with chats at many of the little towns once frequented by the judge and lawyers, and longer visits at all of the county seats.

With the exception of Decatur, most of the court houses in Lincoln's day were built of either wood or brick, surmounted with a white tower or cupola and fronted by a veranda with large white pillars. The Metamora shrine is typical of the buildings that have since given way to progress.

At the hotels all ate at a common table—the judge at the head of the festive board, with lawyers, witnesses, and even the accused partaking of the meal simultaneously. The cooking was not always the best, but this

[1] Rice, Allen Thorndike, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln,* story of Eighth Circuit by Leonard Swett, p. 456.

never brought a protest from Mr. Lincoln; the rooms were small and stuffy, but he never grumbled. In his pocket he carried a copy of Euclid which he studied along the way until he was able to demonstrate all of the propositions in the six books. He had a thirst for knowledge.

No matter how busy, he always took time to call on his relatives, when in the vicinity of their homes. One of his aunts lived several miles in the country and one evening he proposed walking to the place to make her a visit.

"Better remain with us tonight," urged his professional friends.

"Why, Aunt's heart would be broken if I should leave town without calling upon her," he responded, and went out into the darkness.

There were many forms of evening entertainment. The late Col. William J. Anderson, Madison, Wisconsin, journalist and former resident of Elgin, Illinois, once told me the story related to him by his music teacher, Mrs. Lois E. Hillis, at Elgin. She was a member of the Newhall family, a concert troupe well known in the middle west before the Civil War. In the fall of 1849, the father, two sisters and a brother were giving recitals in central Illinois, of which the old Eighth Judicial Circuit was a part. One evening they met a party of lawyers at the hotel, among them Mr. Lincoln, of whom they had never heard before. That night at their request an impromptu entertainment was arranged.

"Quite late in the evening, when there was a lapse in the musical program, one of the lawyers turned to

Mr. Lincoln and asked him to sing one of his songs," Mrs. Hillis told Mr. Anderson.

"After much embarrassment, Mr. Lincoln explained that the others were attempting to 'make a fool of him;' that he never sang.

" 'But I'll tell you what I'll do for you,' said Mr. Lincoln. 'You girls have been so kind singing for us, I'll recite for you my favorite poem.'

"Leaning his awkward form against the casing and half closing his eyes he repeated the verses, 'O! Why Should the Spirit of Mortal be Proud?' "

The dramatic recital, the insistent appeal in sentence and thought silenced the mirth, and when he had finished there was a demand to know the author and where the poem might be found.

"I do not know the author," [1] responded Mr. Lincoln to Mrs. Hillis, "but if you like the lines I will write them out for you tonight."

This he did, and years afterward in the pinch of circumstances she sold the copy for $125, but a few hours later in remorse tendered back the check only to find that the collector had placed a value of $1,000 upon it.

As one proceeds between great fields of growing corn over the lines of cement which now connect the county seats of the old circuit, stories are told by the people, handed down from father to son, that remind one of the variety of the *Arabian Night* tales. Each carries an illustration of some characteristic—the human Lincoln who has left an impress upon the people that will last for generations. The whole gamut of

[1] "O! Why Should the Spirit of Mortal be Proud?" by William Knox, a young Scotchman, contemporary of Sir Walter Scott.

law applicable to a pioneer people passes in review.[1] Every conceivable variety of cases was handled by Mr. Lincoln.

While at Bloomington, the seat of McLean county, the editor of the paper told me of the evidence gathered by his staff of the many trips which Mr. Lincoln had made there in attending court, and particularly the circumstances surrounding his coming there to aid in founding the Republican party in Illinois.

"It was while attending court here after the campaign of 1858 that Mr. Lincoln consented to write for Jesse W. Fell his now famous autobiography," the editor explained. "If Mr. Fell had not been the persevering man that he was, it is probable that the story of Lincoln by Lincoln would never have been written. Mr. Fell conceived the idea that it would be a good policy to have something in the form of a biography for publication in the Eastern papers. He called upon Mr. Lincoln at the court room and suggested to him the propriety of preparing such a sketch. After much urging, Mr. Lincoln sat down at a desk in the old court house and prepared the short, yet comprehensive, autobiography which has been so extensively published since his death. It is the only thing left on record by Mr. Lincoln giving the facts of that early life and career which culminated in his election to the Presidency."

On the route from Bloomington to Springfield is the city of Lincoln with 15,000 population, the seat of Logan county. Abraham Lincoln officiated at its birth and it became the only city in the world named for him before he became famous. When enterprising

[1] List of subjects of these cases, Moores' *Abraham Lincoln, Lawyer*, p. 491.

men of this locality learned that the railroad was to come their way, they bought land and had Mr. Lincoln prepare the papers for recording the sale of lots.

"What will we name the town?" asked one.

"Name it Lincoln," his partner answered.

"You better not do that," interposed Mr. Lincoln, "for I never knew anything named Lincoln that amounted to much."

The promoters declined his advice and named their townsite for him and it soon became the county seat. The old, two-story frame court house in which he practiced law stood until 1929 at the outskirts of the city marked by a bronze tablet on a stone monument. It has since been purchased by Henry Ford and moved to Dearborn, Michigan.

It was here that court house officials recalled that one of the most interesting law cases handled by Mr. Lincoln came from this vicinity. The horological cradle was a contrivance invented by Alexander Edmonds of Mount Pulaski, Illinois, which when wound up would rock a baby to sleep. A disagreement between the inventor and one of his financial backers resulted in a suit. Mr. Lincoln had a mechanical bend of mind[1] and took over the handling of the case, exhibiting the contraption in his argument before the Supreme Court at Springfield. Edmonds contended that he was entitled to damages because of the withholding of promised capital. Before the case ended, it was discovered there were no letters patent for the cradle and the court ruled against its patentability.

"The thing is like some of the glib and interesting

[1] In 1857, while in Pekin attending court, Lincoln spent much time studying the telegraph, which had just been introduced. Bates, *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office*, p. 144.

talkers we know," said Mr. Lincoln to John W. Bunn, Springfield banker, following the argument. "When it gets to going it doesn't know when to stop."

South of Springfield one is reminded that it was in this vicinity that Mr. Lincoln returned to rescue the pig mired in mud in order to make peace with his conscience; at a blackberry copse further on he is said to have stopped to put fallen birds back into the nest; at another town he had refused to take an adopted son's suit for wages because he reasoned that the evidence presented against the foster-father, he well knew, could not be founded on fact; and at one county seat he deserted a case in which he was counsel when he became convinced that his client was a perjurer.

"Tell the judge my hands are dirty and I have gone to wash them," was the word he sent back to the court when inquiry was made as to the reason for his absence.

Reminiscences and traditions abound in every town along the route.

Two Lincoln stories told me by Mrs. Thomas B. Shoaff of Shelbyville, wife of the pioneer editor there, give glimpses of the real Lincoln on the circuit.

"Northeast of the Lincoln Square stands the Lincoln Inn," said Mrs. Shoaff, "with a marker in the window of the room in which Lincoln slept. This building was first known as the Tackett Tavern, then the Tallman house and now the Lincoln Inn. Mr. Lincoln used to board with Mrs. Tallman, and during one of the sessions of the court which 'Abe' attended Mrs. Tallman served an old-fashioned boiled dinner. Lincoln ate with a relish. Returning later to attend court, he went into the kitchen and asked Mrs. Tallman if

she would 'please give us another boiled dinner today.'"

The other incident showed that Mr. Lincoln was not always able to collect the fees which he had earned while practicing on the circuit.

"Mr. Lincoln and Judge Samuel Moulton had a case in court here over a calf in which Mr. Moulton appeared for the defendant," continued Mrs. Shoaff. "When Mr. Lincoln became President, Mr. Moulton was in Congress and went to pay his respects to the Chief Executive. In the course of the conversation he asked the President if he remembered the 'calf case' in the Shelbyville court. He stated that he had received a five-dollar gold piece which looked as big as a cart-wheel to him. The President laughed heartily and said, 'Well, you did better than me, for I never received a cent.'"

Further along on the circuit, close to the Indiana line, was Danville. One night the mock tribunal, called the "Ogmathorial court," tried Lincoln for impoverishing the bar by the small fees which he was charging. As the story is told at the court house in Danville, it appears that Ward H. Lamon, practicing law there, usually retained Mr. Lincoln to appear with him in most of the cases, there being an understanding of partnership regarding litigation arising in that locality. A man named Scott had come to Lamon and retained him to prevent the marriage of his demented sister, who owned about $10,000 in property, to a gallant adventurer, who had his designs on the wealth.

"What will it cost to put this matter through the court?" asked Scott.

"Wait until we see how much time it takes," responded Mr. Lamon.

"I want the fee fixed in advance. Then I will know what I am to pay."

"Well, it will cost $250," answered Lamon. "If it takes but little time, the fee will be less."

After the case was called, it required less than twenty minutes to dispose of the matter to the satisfaction of Mr. Scott, who promptly paid the fee in the presence of Mr. Lincoln.

"Give half of that back," demanded Lincoln. "You have charged too much."

"Lincoln, I have been watching you and Lamon," broke in Judge Davis, who had overheard the conversation. "You are impoverishing this bar by your picayune charges of fees, and the lawyers have reason to complain of you. You are now almost as poor as Lazarus, and if you don't make people pay you more for your services you will die as poor as Job's turkey."

"That money comes out of the pocket of a poor demented girl," retorted Lincoln, "and I would rather starve than swindle her in this manner."

That night the lawyers who gathered around the hotel in Danville tried Lincoln before the mock court, with Judge Davis presiding. The case was entitled "Catch 'em" *vs.* "Cheat 'em." Lincoln was convicted of the crime of leveling against the pockets of his brethren at the bar.

"I'll pay my fine but I'll continue my methods," declared Mr. Lincoln. Then the story-telling began and

[1] This story is related in detail in Ward H. Lamon's *Recollections of Lincoln*, p. 17.

Lincoln continued to be the center of interest for the evening.

Someone at Clinton, the county seat of De Witt, reminded me that it was in this city that Mr. Lincoln first became cognizant of George B. McClellan, later appointed by him to have charge of the Army of the Potomac. Lincoln was appearing as counsel in a case for the Illinois Central Railroad and hoped the litigation might go over for the term.

"We are not ready for trial," remarked Mr. Lincoln when the case was called.

"Why is not the company ready to go to trial?" interposed Judge Davis.

"We are embarrassed by the absence of, or rather want of, information from Captain McClellan," Mr. Lincoln replied.

"Who is Captain McClellan and why is he not here?" the Judge demanded.

"All I know of him is that he is the engineer of the railroad and why he is not here this deponent sayeth not," answered Mr. Lincoln in a non-committal way, and the case went over. Within two years Mr. Lincoln had learned so much about Captain McClellan that he put him in charge of an army that was greater than the combined forces of Napoleon and Wellington at Waterloo.

Away from the main route of the old Eighth Circuit at Beardstown, on the Illinois river, is a Lincoln memorial that attracts more popular attention than any other connected with his legal career. Near the doorway of the city hall, formerly the Cass county court house, is a tablet which reads:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WHO FOR THE SAKE OF A MOTHER IN DISTRESS
CLEARED HER SON, DUFF ARMSTRONG, OF THE
CHARGE OF MURDER IN THIS HALL OF JUSTICE
MAY 7, 1858.

The Beardstown Woman's Club erected this tablet on February 12, 1909.

When Abraham Lincoln was clerking in the Offut store in New Salem, he became acquainted with the Armstrong family. Jack, the father of Duff Armstrong, was the leader of the "Clary Grove Boys," whom Lincoln had worsted in a wrestling match on a spot now marked on the hills of New Salem. From that day Mr. Lincoln was recognized by the people of Clary Grove, and they never failed to give him a good vote for any office he desired.

The trial arose out of the murder of James P. Metzker which occurred at a camp meeting at Virgin's Grove in Mason county, August 29, 1857. Duff Armstrong and James H. Norris were having some drinks when an argument with Metzker led to words and he was hit on the head with a blunt object. The injury resulted in death three days later. Both Armstrong and Norris were arrested. Norris was convicted of manslaughter, but the evidence by Charles Allen, star witness for the state, in the trial indicated that the fatal blow had been struck by Armstrong.

When Mr. Lincoln learned that the family was in trouble, he wrote a letter to Mrs. Hannah Armstrong tendering his services free. Popular excitement was so high that the trial of the case was transferred to Beardstown. Allen, testifying for the state, was positive in his statements. He repeated several times that

the blow was delivered by Armstrong at about eleven o'clock at night.

"Inform the jury how you managed to see so clearly at that time," requested Mr. Lincoln.

"By moonlight," responded the witness.

"Was there enough light to see plainly?"

"The moon was about where the sun would be at ten o'clock in the morning," the witness explained.

Mr. Lincoln then produced an almanac, which he exhibited to the jury, and which showed that the moon was already setting and a mellow darkness would have shrouded the scene. Armstrong was promptly acquitted.

Volumes of literature have grown up about this case. It is openly hinted by some writers that the almanac offered in evidence was of another year. But the weight of opinion seems to favor the belief that Lincoln stooped to no trickery in either altering the figures of the almanac or presenting one of another date.[1]

"It's all foolishness to talk about Lincoln having had that almanac fixed up for the trial," Duff Armstrong, turned religious, maintained to his dying day. "'Uncle Abe' would not charge my mother a cent; he said that her happiness over my freedom was his sufficient reward."

Mr. Lincoln's success at the bar was earned by his appeal to equity; the intuitive sense of understanding people; a fairness of presentation; a willingness to allow honest evidence to be offered by others; and a statement of facts to the jury, so simple, so illumined

[1] Barton, W. E., *Lincoln*, Vol. 1, pp. 310-318; Richards, *Lincoln*, pp. 45-54; Stevens, *Interview with Duff Armstrong, A Reporter's Lincoln*, pp. 19-21; Schweer, Mrs. T. G., *History of Beardstown*, pp. 14-17.

by story and incident, that the twelve men comprehended.

"I have sat on the jury in his cases," Felix Ryan of Lincoln often told his neighbors. "Mr. Lincoln knew nearly every juror, and when he made his speech he talked to the jurors, one at a time, like an old friend who wanted to reason it out with them and make it as easy as possible for them to find the truth."

Lawrence Weldon,[1] who traveled the circuit with Lincoln, has left such a picture:

"He was not an encyclopedia of cases, but in the textbooks of the profession and in the clear perception of legal principles, with natural capacity to apply them, he had great ability. He was not a case lawyer, but a lawyer who dealt in the deep philosophy of the law. He always knew the cases which might be quoted as absolute authority, but beyond that he contented himself in the application and discussion of general principles. In the trial of a case he moved cautiously, and never examined, or cross-examined, a witness to the detriment of his side. If the witness told the truth he was safe from his attacks, but woe betide the unlucky and dishonest individual who suppressed the truth, or colored it against Mr. Lincoln's side. His speeches to the jury were very effective specimens of forensic oratory. He talked the vocabulary of the people, and the jury understood every point he made and every thought he uttered. I never saw him when I thought he was trying to make a display for mere display; but his imagination was simple and pure in the richest gems of true eloquence. He constructed short sentences

[1] Rice, Allen T., *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 126-129.

of small words, and never wearied the mind of the jury by mazes of elaboration."

Of the hundreds of cases in which he appeared, at least three are celebrated for the wide application of principles. They arose at a time when no precedents had been established to point the way. The first of these is Hurd *vs.* The Rock Island Railroad Bridge, popularly known as the "Effie Alton Case." It involved the right of railroads to erect bridges over navigable streams. The "Effie Alton," a steamboat owned by St. Louis interests, ran into the Rock Island railroad bridge and was destroyed. An action for damages resulted and the case attracted the widest publicity. The real principle at stake was whether water or rail transportation would carry unhampered the traffic of the nation. Mr. Lincoln appeared for the railroad company and argued that "one man has as much right to cross a stream as another man has to navigate it." It was not until 1862, after he was President, that the issue reached the United States Supreme Court. Its decision sustained the railroad company. It was a victory for railroad development and expansion.

In the McCormick Reaper case which raised the question of infringement of patent, Mr. Lincoln was retained as a junior counsel, his associates being George Harding and Edwin M. Stanton. The case was tried at Cincinnati and it was his first meeting with Stanton, whom he later appointed Secretary of War. Lincoln was treated shabbily in this case by his associates.

"I am going home to study law and be ready to meet these smart college men when they come West," he told Ralph Emerson of Rockford, his client.

The third case was that of Johnson *vs.* Jones, called the "Sandbar Case," involving the ownership of land made by accretions from Lake Michigan. It was argued in Chicago a month before he was nominated for President. After his election he retired from the case.

"A review of Lincoln's cases in the Supreme Court of Illinois, added to an examination of his state papers and the debate with Douglas, will convince the most skeptical that Abraham Lincoln was one of the ablest lawyers of his time," says John T. Richards, former president of the Chicago Bar Association, in a centennial address. "Lincoln and other men who traveled the circuit in those days laid for us the foundation of the system of jurisprudence which is the common law of Illinois today.

"Lincoln appeared alone in the Supreme Court in sixty-three cases; of these the decision was in his favor in thirty-eight cases and he was defeated in twenty-five. He appeared as an associate counsel in the Supreme Court in one hundred and ten cases, in which the parties represented by him were successful in sixty-seven, and were defeated in forty-three cases. What lawyer of this generation can show a greater record of successes?" [1]

Mr. Lincoln was active in the practice of law until he was nominated for the Presidency, and even after being notified went to Bloomington to settle a case which had not been completed. When he closed his cases in Illinois, he had served in Congress two years; had practiced law over twenty years, and yet he had accumulated less than $10,000. His average annual in-

[1] MacChesney, *Lincoln the Tribute of a Century*, pp. 160-161.

LINCOLN THE LAWYER

come from the law has been estimated by investigators at $3,000.

While President he dreamed and talked of the day to come when he could return to the practice, and his final act before departing for his inauguration was to direct that his name be continued in the firm.

There is a touch of pathos in the last day of Abraham Lincoln, the law partner.

"After those things were all disposed of," says Mr. Herndon,[1] "he crossed to the opposite side of the room and threw himself down on the old office sofa . . . He lay there for some moments his face to the ceiling without either of us speaking. Presently, he inquired: 'Billy'—he always called me by that name—'how long have we been together?' 'Over sixteen years,' I answered. 'We've never had a cross word during all that time, have we?' . . . He gathered a bundle of papers and books he wished to take with him and started to go, but before leaving he made the strange request that the sign board which swung on its rusty hinges at the foot of the stairway would remain. 'Let it hang there undisturbed,' he said, with a significant lowering of the voice. 'Give our clients to understand that the election of a president makes no change in the firm of Lincoln & Herndon. If I live, I am coming back some time, and then we'll go right on practicing law as if nothing had happened.' He lingered for a moment as if to take a last look at the old quarters and then passed through the door into the narrow hallway."

[1] Herndon, *Lincoln*, pp. 483-484.

CHAPTER IX

AT THE CROSS ROADS IN PEORIA

"THOUGH his first reply to Douglas was not recorded, Lincoln's second, made at Peoria twelve days later, still exists. It is a landmark in his career. It sums up all his long, slow development in political science, lays the abiding foundation of everything he thought thereafter. In this great speech, the end of his novitiate, he rings the changes on the white man's charter of liberty."

Three times I read that paragraph from the volume of Nathaniel Wright Stephenson.[1] I wanted to feel the influence of every word. Then I placed the book on the table of my hotel room in Peoria and went to sleep. Early next morning I was awakened by the chime of cathedral bells; a low, insistent invitation to arise. The call seemed to come in circles of pleading notes. It was Sunday—bright and glorious. The crowds and motors which choked the crosswalks the night before had vanished. From my window, I could see the Illinois river, quiet but murky in the distance.

I remembered that when Abraham Lincoln first saw the river at Peoria he was a soldier returning from the Black Hawk War in 1832. For days he had been plodding his way from the Wisconsin territory through thickets and over trails. He was tired, almost discouraged because of the futile outcome of the adven-

[1] Stephenson, *Lincoln*, p. 78.

ture. A short time was spent with the people of this hamlet; then he and his companion bought a canoe and started down the stream for their homes. Many times later he returned as a lawyer to Peoria and saw the river—an artery for packets and side-wheelers carrying passengers and freight. Not a vestige of this pioneer activity now remained. Instead, the refreshing mornings are made entertaining by anxious, hungry gulls swooping or winging their tireless, searching way over the water's expanse.

Crossing the court house square, I soon found the spot for which I had vainly searched in the darkness the night before. Abraham Lincoln had come to Peoria, October 16, 1854, to deliver an address from the steps of the old court house in reply to Senator Stephen A. Douglas, author of the bill which had opened the way for the spread of slavery to all the new territories. Today his words of prophecy are written in letters of bronze near the place where they were uttered.

The steps to the court house which marks the site are made attractive by a dense growth of luxuriant shrubbery. I sat for an hour in the shade to watch the interest of passers-by. Strangers paused a moment to read the words and then went their way as if mystified by their probable meaning. Others trod the historic route oblivious of its shadowing significance, perhaps unmindful of the tremendous national importance of the day and event commemorated.

The background for that occasion had long been in development. From 1820 to 1861 the slavery issue was predominant in affairs. It haunted political meetings like a ghost at which no party would strike. The Mis-

souri Compromise of 1820 had prohibited slavery north of "thirty-six-thirty." But the annexation of Texas in 1845 and the Mexican war, foreboding the extension of slavery by the South, aroused feeling throughout the North. Abolition societies sprang up. Old party lines fell into decay. The anemic Whig organization dwindled. New groups, espousing new issues, arose to take their places. It was a period of national unrest. Secession fogged the atmosphere.

To avert a threatened crisis, Clay and Webster, Cass and Houston joined in framing the Compromise of 1850. It left the Missouri free line untouched; abolished the slave trade in the District of Columbia, but enacted a stringent fugitive slave law, which so exasperated the North as to plant afresh the seeds of contention.

"I never expect to see the slavery question opened again," declared Senator Douglas of Illinois.

Yet four years later it was re-opened by himself. The lands of Kansas and Nebraska were rapidly being settled. People were demanding protection. Senator Douglas offered a bill for the organization of government in Kansas and Nebraska, and later presented an amendment, which permitted the people of the new territories to settle the question of slavery—his now famous doctrine of "squatter sovereignty." It was this lifting of the quarantine on slavery, limited before to a line south of the Missouri border, that recalled Abraham Lincoln to political life.

With the signing of the measure by President Pierce on May 31, 1854, a shudder passed over the North followed by an appeal for redress. Old landmarks that had preserved the peace of the Union for a quarter of

a century were being swept away. Three months later when Senator Douglas returned to Illinois he found the North in a turmoil of distress. Chicago greeted him with hisses and the tolling of funeral bells. He turned to Springfield during state fair week early in October for a hearing. Mr. Lincoln was called upon to answer, which he did in a brilliant, but unrecorded address. Nevertheless the argument was easy of understanding.

Should slavery be confined to its old limits, or should it be allowed to expand into new territory? That was the issue. Mr. Lincoln wanted the slavery embargo of the Missouri Compromise re-established at once.

"Judge Douglas says it is not quite fair to oppose him in this variety of ways," said Mr. Lincoln in describing the shock to the nation by the passage of the repeal bill. "He should remember that he took us by surprise—astounded us by his measure. We were thunderstruck and stunned, and we reeled and fell in utter confusion. But we rose, each fighting, grasping whatever we could first reach—a scythe, pitchfork, chopping axe, or a butcher's cleaver. We struck in the direction of the sound, and we were rapidly closing in upon him. He must not think to divert us from our purpose by showing us that our drill, our dress and our weapons are not entirely perfect and uniform. When the storm shall be passed he shall find us still Americans, no less devoted to the continued union and prosperity of the country than heretofore."

A Democratic rally was planned for Senator Douglas twelve days later at Peoria and a petition was presented by citizens inviting Mr. Lincoln to make a reply. He accepted. It was his speech on this occasion that

has received the almost universal praise of historians.

"Many critics consider Lincoln's Peoria speech of 1854 the ablest political argument ever delivered, and assert that no master of logic in the world could have answered it," writes William Eleroy Curtis, one of his biographers.

"It was his first speech that attracted public attention," L. E. Chittenden records.

"Marking as it does with unmistakable precision a step in the second period of his intellectual development, it deserves the careful attention of the student of his life," announce Nicolay and Hay in their monumental work. Nathaniel Wright Stephenson characterizes it as having "laid the basis of his political significance," and Miss Ida M. Tarbell says that "for vigor, compactness, logic, solid information, one would have to go far to find the equal of this first speech of Lincoln's against the extension of slavery."

Nor did the picturesqueness of the scene cloud the vision of listeners. There was always a good deal of éclat about the political movements of Senator Douglas; a marked simplicity attendant upon Mr. Lincoln's appearance. A Peoria paper described the reception for Mr. Douglas, but made no mention of how Mr. Lincoln arrived.

"Mr. Douglas rode into the city at the head of a triumphal procession, seated in a carriage drawn by four beautiful white palfreys and preceded by a band of music," says the newspaper account. "Cannon boomed in welcome of the distinguished visitor and the cheers of his friends resounded through our quiet streets."

Both addresses were delivered from the balcony of

the old Peoria court house to a crowd of people that came from the prairies. They hitched their horses at the cross-roads near the square and stayed to the end. Senator Douglas spoke for three hours, concluding after 5 o'clock in the evening. Mr. Lincoln asked the people to go home to supper and return at 7 o'clock, saying that "as Judge Douglas has the right to reply, I hope you will all return to see him skin me."

While in Peoria I found that the event is considered of such importance that a large volume has recently been prepared and written by Byron C. Bryner, probably the last man living who heard the famous Peoria debate.[1] So many of the political axioms of today are current in Mr. Lincoln's address that upon re-reading the speech while there I marked a few of the significant passages. Early in the address I came upon the phrase, which I had found blazoned over the portals of the Lincoln monument at his Hodgenville, Kentucky, birthplace:

> STAND WITH ANYONE THAT STANDS RIGHT, STAND WITH HIM WHILE HE IS RIGHT, AND PART WITH HIM WHEN HE GOES WRONG.

That sentence was delivered as an admonition to the members of the Whig party, who believed that Kansas should be free, that slavery should not be extended; but feared that if they announced this position, they would be charged with having joined the radical abolition party. Mr. Lincoln's words have long since become a political maxim.

But there are other arguments and prophecies made on that occasion which will be remembered as long as

[1] Bryner, Byron C., *Abraham Lincoln in Peoria* (1926), p. 27 *et seq.*

the people revere the wisdom and memory of Mr. Lincoln:

"I wish to make and to keep the distinction between the existing institution of slavery and the extension of it so broad and so clear that no honest man can misunderstand me, and no dishonest one successfully misrepresent me.

* * *

"The doctrine of self-government is right—absolutely and eternally right—but it has no application as here attempted. Whether it has such application depends upon whether a negro is or is not a man. If he is not a man, in that case he who is a man may as a matter of self-government do just what he pleases with him. But if the negro is a man, is it not to that extent a total destruction of self-government to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism.

* * *

"What I do say is that no man is good enough to govern another man without the other's consent. I say this is the leading principle, the sheet anchor of American Republicanism.

* * *

"Whether slavery shall go into Nebraska or other new territories is not a matter of exclusive concern to the people who may go there. The whole nation is interested that the best use shall be made of these territories. We want them for the homes of free white people. Slave states are places for poor white people

to remove from, not to remove to. New free states are the places for poor people to go to, and better their condition. For this use the nation needs these territories.

* * *

"I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses North and South.

"When Southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we are, I acknowledge the fact.

* * *

"If there is anything which it is the duty of the people never to intrust to any hands but their own, that thing is the preservation and perpetuity of their own liberties and institutions.

* * *

"Slavery is founded in the selfishness of man's nature —opposition to it is the love of justice. These principles are at eternal antagonism, and when brought into collision so fiercely as slavery extension brings them, shocks and throes and convulsions must ceaselessly follow.

* * *

"If you are opposed to the principle—let no wheedling, no sophistry, divert you from throwing a direct vote against it.

"In our greedy chase to make profit of the negro, let us beware lest we 'cancel and tear in pieces' even the white man's charter of freedom."

After the Peoria debate it was announced by Mr. Lincoln's friends that he would follow Senator Douglas and would answer him wherever he spoke. It was then that Judge Douglas sought an interview.

"If you will go home and make no more speeches at my appointments," proposed Senator Douglas, "I will go to no more of my published places of speaking, and remain silent. I can make nothing off you, and you can't off me."

"Your will be done, Senator Douglas; I don't wish to crowd you," Mr. Lincoln answered, and returned to Springfield, where he utilized the remaining time of the campaign in revising his Peoria speech for publication.[1]

Interest in Mr. Lincoln did not subside. Enthusiastic friends were allowed by him to place his name before the people in the fall of 1854 as a candidate for the state legislature. He was overwhelmingly elected in November. Early in January, however, he realized the mistake and resigned. There were bigger things in view. He became the Whig candidate for United States Senator to fill the vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of General James Shields, Democrat, who was up for re-election. Legislatures then made the choice, and the balloting was started in February, 1855.

The fire of the Kansas issue immediately brought many friends to Lincoln's standard. He felt confident of success. When he saw that a Nebraska Democrat might be chosen through a coalition, he sacrificed his votes to Lyman Trumbull, electing Trumbull on the

[1] Bryner, *Ibid.*, pp. 63-72.

fifteenth ballot, and scored the first great victory in Illinois for the anti-slavery cause.[1]

For the next five years the slavery issue held the center of the public forum with Mr. Lincoln and Senator Douglas as the outstanding contestants. At the end of the long, tedious road they saw the White House. Ride where you will in Illinois, in all of the larger cities and in many of the smaller ones markers will be found to commemorate the spots where speeches were made in that notable educational movement which resulted in founding a Republican party dedicated to freedom with Lincoln as its leader.

[1] See Chapter XVI, Twilight in the Old Sangamon Court House.

CHAPTER X

BLOOMINGTON—BIRTHPLACE OF PARTY REVOLT

BLOOMINGTON sits all green and gold in the sun on a little swell in a prairie of corn fields. Its summer breath is scented with the tang of fresh-turned earth and the odor that comes with quick growth.

To approach this city of 40,000 population from the south is to realize that it is a place of importance—with highways radiating like the rays of a diamond, linking it with the trade relations of the country. From a commercial standpoint it seems markedly substantial. With the coming of evening its drowsy, trailing smoke banners blur the blue line of the world's margin. But even in its opulence the city wears the cloak of mystery, and its spirit is both glowing and reminiscent.

It was an evening in May. I had been touring in central Illinois, renewing acquaintance with old Lincoln haunts and finding new ones, when attention was called by my companion to an item in the paper announcing a celebration that evening at Bloomington to commemorate the delivery of Lincoln's "Lost Speech," May 29, 1856. It was there that he had burned his bridges, had given up further hope of reviving the Whig party, had openly espoused the fomenting organization already gathering momentum as the "Anti-Nebraska Revolt," and had delivered a philippic against slavery, so burning in passion and enthralling in appealing delivery that reporters had forgotten their

note-taking until all was over. Upon what was said there that day no two have ever been able to agree. From that hour Abraham Lincoln was the leader of the Republican party in Illinois.

"I wish we had learned of this meeting earlier," commented my companion.

"It's not too late yet," I answered, and finishing the evening meal with a gulp we soon headed our little car on the cement highway for a forty-mile destination.

Riding through the open country at sundown is an auspicious hour for recollections. Something in the close of a rare spring day attunes one's spirit to old songs and urges one to recall the stories read long ago. Pastoral scenery invites reminiscence. Incidents surrounding events that may not have impressed me had fixed themselves so indelibly on my companion that soon the whole epoch at Bloomington had been repeated.

It was the story of a political revolt all over the Northwest, the marshaling of men and events that submerged old party lines, inundating false issues and giving birth to a new movement of enkindled freedom among men.

Abraham Lincoln had been slow to lift political anchor. For more than twenty years he had been a leader of the Whig party. He had gone to the Illinois legislature in 1834 as a Whig; he had been the party's candidate for speaker of the House in 1838 and again in 1840; three times, in 1840, 1844, and in 1848, he had been a Whig candidate for presidential elector; he had been tendered the party nomination for governor in 1841 and refused; he had been elected to Congress as the only Whig from Illinois in 1846; he had

campaigned in Illinois and Indiana for its presidential nominees, William H. Harrison, Henry Clay, Zachary Taylor and General Winfield Scott; and he had been the Whig United States senatorial candidate before the state legislature in 1855. Then only for a moment he had faltered in allegiance to party and had broken the deadlock by putting principle above fealty and had thrown his strength to Lyman Trumbull, electing a Democrat of anti-Nebraska sentiments. The issue involved had become greater than office. He had made an anti-slavery man Senator,[1] in the state from which Senator Stephen A. Douglas, author of the Nebraska bill, held a seat. There was a clash of contending principles. Now the fight for political supremacy in Illinois was on.

Passage of the Nebraska bill lifting the embargo on slavery had made Mr. Lincoln the outstanding opponent of the legislation in Illinois, but at first he did not change his party label. Though he had denounced the measure at Springfield in a debate with Senator Douglas, in the fall of 1854, when it came to joining the Republican uprising he held back. Enthusiasts meeting at Chicago on November 17 placed his name on their state central committee.

"I have been perplexed some to understand why my name was placed upon that committee," he wrote weeks later. "I was not consulted on the subject nor was I apprised of the appointment until I discovered it by accident two or three weeks afterward. I suppose my opposition to the principle of slavery is as strong as that of any member of the Republican party; but I have also supposed that the extent to which I feel authorized

[1] See Chapter XVI, Twilight in the Old Sangamon Court House.

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"FARMINGTON," THE HOME OF JOSHUA SPEED

to carry that opposition, practically, was not at all satisfactory to that party. The leading men who organized that party were present on the 4th of October at the discussion between Douglas and myself in Springfield and had full opportunity not to misunderstand my position. Do I misunderstand them?"

Mr. Lincoln still claimed to be a Whig. Defeat as a candidate for United States Senator early in 1855, with the slavery issue foreshadowing every vote, gave him a problem for reflection. What was to be the future of the Whig party? Six months later, answering a letter from Joshua Speed, an old time friend and benefactor, then living in Kentucky, he wrote:

"I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no Whigs, and that I am an abolitionist. I now do no more than oppose the extension of slavery. I am not a Know-Nothing; that is certain. How could I be? How can any one who abhors the oppression of negroes be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring 'All men are created equal.' We now practically read it, 'All men are created equal except negroes.' When the Know-Nothings get control it will read, 'All men are created equal except negroes, foreigners and Catholics.' When it comes to this I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty —to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure and without the alloy of hypocrisy."

With the swift moving of events, Lincoln came cautiously into the new party field. It was an evolutionary process. The Missouri and Kansas borderline

in 1856 was controlled by "ruffians" who carried the torch with murder and arson as weapons. Hundreds were killed, men, women and children; "free state" printing offices were burned; officials were harassed and driven from office for their resistance to mob rule. The people were stirred.

Illinois editors opposed to the Nebraska bill met at Decatur on February 22 to formulate a call for a state convention to draft a program of resistance. They looked to Abraham Lincoln for guidance. He endorsed the program but declined to be a candidate for governor,[1] on the grounds of expediency.

Reluctantly he attended the banquet of the free state editors in the evening at the Cassel House. He said he felt like an interloper. He was reminded of the story of a man driving through the forest on a narrow bridge path and meeting a woman on horseback. The man turned out to let her pass, but she also checked her horse and sat gazing at him for a moment.

"Well, for land's sake, you are the homeliest man I ever saw."

"Yes, Ma'am, but I can't help that."

"No, I suppose not, but you might stay at home."

But the parting of the ways had come. Lincoln soon joined in a call for a convention in Sangamon county to select delegates to a Republican state convention at Bloomington, May 29.

"Go ahead. Will meet you, radicals and all," he had wired from out on the circuit to Herndon[2] in authorizing his approval. Surveying the impotence and wreck of the Whig party he made his great renuncia-

[1] Stevens, Walter B., *A Reporter's Lincoln*, pp. 34-38.
[2] Herndon, *Lincoln*, Vol. II, p. 383.

tion as a delegate. He would attend the party gathering to take marching orders under a new political banner.

It was to attend the reunion in commemoration of this state convention that brought us to Bloomington that night. More than a thousand people were present to rededicate their lives to freedom from domination and to re-enlist in the cause of equality which Mr. Lincoln had advocated. Former Governor Joseph W. Fifer[1] of Bloomington, vigorous Civil War veteran and student of Lincoln's life, presided. When he told the audience that old Major's Hall, where the historic Republican convention had assembled, should be preserved, the response was unanimous. After the banquet, Governor Fifer reviewed the stirring events which the meeting commemorated.

"I have always regarded the convention held here on May 29, 1856, as one of the most important political events in our history," he said. "It was here that Lincoln made his celebrated utterance known in history as the 'Lost Speech.' I have always been greatly interested in the part Mr. Lincoln had in it. I have talked with many of the leading men of our state who were present at this convention and heard Mr. Lincoln speak, and I have tried to learn from them the secret of the wonderful influence he exerted over that convention by his address.

"In a conversation with Joseph Medill of *The Chicago Tribune*, I got a very clear account of the proceedings of the convention and the great influence of Mr. Lincoln's speech. Mr. Medill assisted me greatly

[1] Governor of Illinois, 1889-1893.

in my nomination and election as governor of the state and, of course, I felt very friendly toward him.

"When in Chicago I would frequently call upon him at his office. At one time while I was governor he invited me to his house to take lunch, saying that his folks were all away and we would not be interrupted in our talk. I gladly accepted the invitation and had a most delightful time with him. Our talk was mostly in reference to Mr. Lincoln, his nomination, his election and his career as President. I knew that Mr. Medill had been an old friend and supporter of Lincoln and I was glad indeed to listen to what he had to say.

"Mr. Medill was at a number of the joint debates between Lincoln and Douglas in 1858 and told me many interesting incidents in reference to them. He was at the celebrated convention of May 29 in Bloomington and said that he was a young man then and came down to report the proceedings for *The Tribune* and had a seat on the platform.

"He said that there were a number of good speeches made, but finally the crowd called for 'Lincoln, Lincoln, Lincoln.' Whereupon Mr. Lincoln arose from his seat about half-way back in the audience and remarked that if there was no objection he would talk from where he was, but the crowd would not have it that way and shouted, 'Come to the platform, the platform, the platform.'

"Lincoln then came forward and spoke from the platform. He started off in a rather quiet, unassuming way and Mr. Medill took a few notes of his first utterances, but as Lincoln progressed he warmed to the subject and Medill forgot his notes as did all the other re-

porters, and his face and attention for the rest of the time were riveted upon Lincoln.

"Mr. Lincoln's manner was so earnest and wonderfully eloquent that everybody forgot themselves and in consequence no report was ever made of Mr. Lincoln's speech and it is now known in history as his 'Lost Speech.'

"Mr. Medill said that Mr. Lincoln did not gesticulate to any great extent but most of the time held his hands on hips and his body would move from side to side as he spoke. Mr. Medill said he never heard such a speech before nor since, and that he did not believe that its equal ever fell from mortal lips. When Lincoln took his seat, Mr. Medill cast his eyes on his note paper but found only a few sentences and across his paper lay his pencil, and he had no recollection when he quit writing but supposed from his notes that it was very early in Lincoln's address.

"I have talked with many of Mr. Lincoln's warm friends in reference to that celebrated speech and they account for its wonderful eloquence and influence in this way: Mr. Lincoln very soon after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill saw that a new political party was likely to arise in order to oppose the further spread of slavery; that Lincoln was an old Whig and wanted to take as many of his party friends with him into the new party as possible, and for that reason he kept back in line for some time with his Whig friends, trying all the while, as a Whig, to convince them that a new party was likely to arise and that it was the only means by which the spread of slavery could be arrested.

"The view of these friends was that he had kept back his best thoughts and arguments in favor of a new party

until the convention of May 29 met and that his sentiments and views had been somewhat suppressed and dammed up, as is sometimes the case with a great river, and that at this convention the dam gave way and the waters overflowed the whole country.

"Governor Oglesby, Senator Cullom and Milton Hay have all told me that they accounted for his speech in this way, and after studying the whole situation I am inclined to believe that they are correct in their views."

"Are there no men living who heard the 'Lost Speech?'" I asked Jacob L. Hasbrouck, the editor of *The Bloomington Pantagraph.*

"John W. Fulwiler, now eighty-four, who lives at 618 East Walnut Street, was present and has vivid recollections of the event," Mr. Hasbrouck told me. "He was to have been the honor guest here this evening, but his health would not permit his attendance."

"If he will only live until morning we will visit him," interrupted my companion. Then in spite of the late hour we went out to locate Major's Hall.

One block from the court house, at the southwest corner of Front and East Streets, we found a two-story, red brick building now housing a grocery. The upper story which contained the hall has been removed. Otherwise the building remains as it stood in 1856. On the outer wall is a tablet which reads:

THIS TABLET MARKS THE SITE
WHERE
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
DELIVERED HIS FAMOUS
"LOST SPEECH"
MAY 29, 1856.
PLACED BY LETITIA GREEN STEPHENSON CHAPTER,
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,
MAY, 29, 1918.

It was a curious medley of political believers who assembled that day. Many were Whigs, others were Anti-Nebraska Democrats and there were a few Free Soilers, Know-Nothings and Abolitionists. John M. Palmer was chosen chairman; opposites like Owen Lovejoy, the abolitionist, and O. H. Browning, a conservative, found in the menace of slavery a common ground. The convention nominated a state ticket, appointed delegates to attend the national convention in Philadelphia in June; selected Mr. Lincoln as one of the party's presidential electors, and adopted a platform. But it was Mr. Lincoln's intense and dramatic speech at the close that fired the hearers with a united purpose, harmonizing the discordant elements.[1]

Before going out to interview Mr. Fulwiler, I decided to visit the McLean County Historical Society. Many times during the evening before, I had been told that the whole story of the convention had been gathered from eye-witnesses and preserved. I was surprised at the wealth of material garnered. It was then that I found how well informed were the delegates to found the new revolt. They had first-hand knowledge of happenings in Kansas. During the day before the meeting, Gov. A. H. Reeder, who had been driven from Kansas by the slave power, addressed incoming delegates, and John S. Emory, the editor from Lawrence, Kansas, whose plant had just been wrecked, mingled with the people. Their stories fired the delegates and gave a theme to Mr. Lincoln which awakened every latent power of reasoning. The occasion was auspicious for

[1] MacChesney, *Tributes of a Century, Lincoln*, pp. 235-238; *Bloomington Pantagraph*, Feb. 12, 1928; May 27, 1928.

a master to touch the chords of harmony. Mr. Emory's account of the Bloomington convention is a little-known, treasured document in the files of the Historical Society. It reads:

"I got off the cars May 28 at Bloomington. I learned that the Missouri river was shut up to free-state men and that there was to be next day a big gathering of the friends of freedom from all parts of Illinois. I here met Governor Reeder, who had got out of the territory in the disguise of an Irish hodcarrier. My own home city had been sacked and our newspaper office demolished, and the types and printing presses thrown into the raging Kaw. The morrow came into that Illinois town, May 29, 1856. It was full of excited men. The very air was surcharged with disturbing forces; men of all parties met face to face on the streets, in the overflowing hotels and about the depot platforms of the incoming trains. Anti-Nebraska Democrats, Free Soil Whigs and Abolitionists were all there. The large hall —Major's—was crowded almost to suffocation as I took my seat on one of the rear benches. Browning was called for, and he enjoined upon us to 'ever remember that slavery itself was one of the compromises of the constitution and was sacredly protected by the supreme law.' After this—rather a cold dose to be administered just at that time—Owen Lovejoy appeared and carried the convention by a storm of eloquent invective and terrific oratory. The committee on resolutions was named. While this was being done I felt a touch on my shoulder, when a young man said he was going to call me out to talk while the committee was out, adding that I must stop when I saw the com-

mittee come in, as it had been arranged to have 'a fellow up here from Springfield, Abe Lincoln, who was to follow me, for he was the best stump speaker in Sangamon County,' as I had been told, and I had never heard his name before. Added to this was the watching I kept up at the hall door of the committee room to be sure to have a fitting end to my rather discursive talk on that now notable occasion, when the party standing for free Kansas was born in Illinois and when a great man appeared as the champion of the Kansas cause. As I stepped aside Mr. Lincoln was called for from all sides. I then for the first time, and the last, fixed my eyes on the great President. I thought he was not dressed very neatly and that his gait in walking up to the platform was sort of swinging. His hair was rather rough and the stoop of his shoulders was noticeable. But what took me most was his intense serious look. He at once held his big audience and handled it like the master he was before the people, pleading in a great and just cause. Today that 'Lost Speech' looks quite conservative. His chief contention all through it was that Kansas must come in free, not slave. He said he did not want to meddle with slavery where it existed and that he was in favor of a reasonable fugitive slave law. I do not now recall how long he spoke. None of us did, I judge. He was at his best, and the mad insolence of the slave power as at that time exhibited before the country furnished plenty of material for his unsparing logic to effectually deal with before a popular audience. Men that day were hardly able to take the true gauge of Mr. Lincoln. He had not yet been recognized as a great man, and so we were not a little puzzled to know where his power came from.

He was not eloquent like Phillips, nor could he electrify an audience like Lovejoy, but he could beat them both in the deep and lasting convictions he left on the minds of all who chanced, as I did, to listen to him in those dark days."

Carrying a copy of Henry C. Whitney's version of the "Lost Speech," we went out to visit Mr. Fulwiler. God had spared him, and we found the aged soldier reclining in a long chair in his parlor enjoying the rays of a bright morning sun. When I told him the occasion for our visit he sat bolt up, his eyes glowing lucent as a boy's and his voice as animated as if the scene were of yesterday.

"I remember it well," he declared with feeling. "I was twelve years old at the time. It was an enthusiastic meeting. I remember some of the things he said. He told us that the South could not leave the Union. I didn't get all of it, but I got all I wanted."

"Did you hear it all?"

"Yes, I was enthusiastic enough to stay there in the building to the finish. The place was crowded. Men yelled and screamed and threw their hats in the air when he had concluded. I guess there were about 500 present. It was very exciting; the speech electrified the convention. Even the reporters forgot to take notes."

Taking from my pocket a book, I read him a paragraph of Mr. Whitney's [1] version written many years afterward from notes taken at the time:

"The conclusion of all is, that we must restore the Missouri Compromise. We must highly resolve that Kansas must be free! We must reinstate the birthday

[1] Tarbell, Vol. II, p. 93.

promise of the Republic; we must reaffirm the Declaration of Independence; we must make good in essence as well as in form Madison's avowal that 'the word slave ought not to appear in the Constitution;' and we must even go further, and decree that only local law and not that time-honored instrument, shall shelter a slaveholder. We must make this a land of liberty in fact, as it is in name. But in seeking to attain these results —so indispensable if the liberty which is our pride and boast shall endure—we will be loyal to the Constitution and to the 'flag of our Union,' no matter what our grievance—even though Kansas shall come in as a slave State; and no matter what theirs—even if we shall restore the Compromise—We will say to the Southern disunionists, 'We won't go out of the Union, and you *shan't!!!*' "

"That has some of the thought, but it isn't the speech," he remarked when I had finished reading. "It was the greatest speech I ever heard. It was like a baptismal fire and his words came in a shrill voice that could be heard a long ways. That speech is lost forever; but its influence went into our lives."

"You're probably the last man living who heard it?" I interrupted.

"I guess so," he replied, and then straightening to full height added: "That speech started him off for the Presidency; it is the speech that made him."

Assisted by my companion he came to the door of his residence, while we took a picture. Intermittently he was talking of Mr. Lincoln and reviewing his own service in the army.

"It's a long time ago," he said as we parted, "but

Mr. Lincoln's speech that afternoon in old Major's Hall stands out as one of the greatest and most exciting events in my life. It stirred men to fight for the right."

Within less than three weeks the delegates selected at Bloomington assembled with the representatives of other states at Philadelphia to nominate a President. It was the first national gathering of the new Republican party. John C. Fremont, "the pathfinder" from California, was nominated for President and William L. Dayton of New Jersey for Vice-President. The enthusiasm of Lincoln's speech had been carried to the convention and he was accorded 110 votes, being Dayton's closest opponent.

"Well! Well! You received 110 votes for Vice-President. That's good!" commented Judge David Davis, large, wheezing, and pompous, in congratulatory tones when he read the vote in the Chicago paper the next afternoon at Urbana, where Lincoln and he were attending court on the circuit.

"I reckon it's not me," responded Mr. Lincoln, unmoved. "There's another Lincoln down in Massachusetts. I've an idea he's the one."

The fires that blazed forth at Bloomington burned through the full campaign. Mr. Lincoln made an active canvass, meeting with favor in some places and with bitter opposition in others. His Bloomington speech in Major's Hall made him the Illinois leader of the new party.

"No d——d abolition speeches can be made in Menard county in this campaign," the crowd declared when he went back to his old home town of Peters-

burg in October to speak.[1] Amid annoyances and heckling he persisted for more than an hour until he put his message over.

"I dropped some things among voters that day in Menard that will stay until the next election," he reported to Herndon. "I soaked that crowd full of political facts that they can't get away from."

When the vote of the nation was counted, the startling strength of the anti-slavery issue was apparent. James Buchanan, Democrat, had polled a popular vote of 1,838,169 to 1,341,264 for John C. Fremont and 874,534 for Millard Fillmore. In Illinois the Republicans had elected a state ticket and polled 105,000 votes for Fremont. Mr. Buchanan had been chosen President by a minority.

"The majority may not choose to be permanently rebuked by that minority," beamed Mr. Lincoln, a speaker at a Republican get-together banquet in Chicago. This was at the Tremont House on December 10, following the campaign. "The central idea in our political opinion is equality of men. Let us reinaugurate the good old central idea. We can do it. The human heart is with us. God is with us."

"Hurray for Abe Lincoln!" came shouts of approval hailing his leadership. "We'll lick Douglas with you in two years."

[1] Rankin, Henry B., *Character Sketches*, p. 124.

CHAPTER XI

THE FATE OF A NATION DECIDED IN FREEPORT

CROWDING a sidewalk corner of one of the back streets in Freeport, Illinois, stands a huge, brown granite boulder that marks an event of historic importance comparable with the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock. Both are monuments to liberty.

Just as thousands go annually to Massachusetts to crowd about Plymouth Rock, where the first white settlers placed their landing feet and dedicated its bleak shores to economic freedom, so other thousands come to Freeport, in the palm of the Mississippi valley, and stand before the rough-hewn cenotaph to pay reverence to the courage and nobility of the spirit of Abraham Lincoln. Freeport, then an ugly country hamlet, now a thriving commercial city of 20,000 people, is a mountain peak in his career.

The nation's history has not forgotten this landmark. Of the seven joint debates between Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas over the slavery issue, the one at Freeport, August 27, 1858, marked an epoch. From that day the question of negro servitude became a moral as well as a political issue; out of that occasion spread the fame of Abraham Lincoln's sagacity, resulting in his election to the Presidency and the consequences of civil war.

"The fate of the nation was decided in Freeport that day," in the judgment of historians. Yet of those who heard the debate none save Lincoln seemed cognizant

of its momentous consequences. It sounded the knell of a united Democratic party on the slavery issue. It lit the smoldering fires of discontent, blending all factions for liberty into a single camp.

As the decades have passed, weaving the story of the Emancipation Proclamation that freed 4,000,000 negro slaves, and the adoption of a constitutional amendment to extend freedom to all races, the tangled skein of circumstances led back to the Freeport debate. So it transpired that in 1903 a President paused in his arduous duties to journey to Freeport and dedicate a monument on the hallowed spot, which blazons a turning point in American history.

"Today we commemorate the spot on which occurred one of these memorable scenes, in accordance with which the whole history of a nation is molded," said President Theodore Roosevelt, dedicating the Lincoln-Douglas monument at Freeport, June 3, 1903. "Here was sounded the keynote of the struggle, which after convulsing the nation made it united and free."

More than half a century has passed since the memorable debate. Only a few of the throng who heard it are now living. Within the past fifteen years, several have told me the events of that day. But it was not until I journeyed to Freeport, one cloudy afternoon in the early fall, stood before the landmark and watched the interest and reverence of passers-by, that I became imbued with the spirit of that day long ago, when 15,000 people gathered in chilling winds to witness one of the greatest intellectual wrestling matches in history.

Freeport's citizens and school children are no longer dull to the significance of the event. The youth of the

streets direct one to the spot and tell of the contest as if it were a happening of yesterday.

"Just off the main street, two blocks to the left—not far from the depot," was the direction of a little girl probably in high school. "And the Brewster Hotel, where Mr. Lincoln stayed, is near by. You can't miss it."

For popular enthusiasm and civic awakening, the Lincoln-Douglas debates were a political revival. Two theories of government—one of compromise and the other of freedom—clutched in deadly combat.

Equally picturesque was the contrast between the contestants. One was scholarly, suave, blustering, ambitious, subtle in argument, adroit in making statements intended to create prejudice. The other was awkward, sad-faced, sharp-featured and unprepossessing, homely, direct in speech, logical in argument, and animated with a terrible frankness of purpose that made his influence on an audience magnetic.

Douglas was dressed like a cavalier—ruffled shirt, dark blue coat, light trousers and shiny shoes. He was short of stature—barely five feet, two inches—thick set, deep-chested, and burly. His general appearance was prosperous. Lincoln was plain, slightly stoop-shouldered, six feet-two inches tall, lonely and melancholy in demeanor. His dress was plebeian. He carried his own shawl over one arm and his grip in the other hand. He wore an old stove-pipe hat, a coarse, faded coat, short in the sleeves, trousers that bagged at the knees, and rough boots.

Senator Douglas was boastful of his New England ancestry. He was born in Vermont in 1813, attended an academy, started west in 1833, studied law in Cleve-

land, was a state's attorney of Illinois in 1835, member of the legislature the following year, secretary of state, Supreme Court judge, member of Congress, and was first elected United States Senator from Illinois in 1847. He had the reputation of being a successful lawyer, a triumphant politician and a debater of national repute. Among his political followers he was the "Little Giant;" among his enemies the "Little Dodger."

Mr. Lincoln was just coming into national political prominence. He had been a member of the Illinois legislature from 1834 to 1842, and in Congress from 1846 to 1848. He had opposed war with Mexico and had temporarily retired from politics when the compromise issues over the slavery question arose. In 1854, aroused by the Kansas-Nebraska law, he plunged into the Whig campaign.

Meantime, events were unfolding which were to match Lincoln and Douglas in the most memorable debates in history. Civil strife had broken out over the admission of Kansas, the controversy being precipitated by the acts and votes of Mr. Douglas. Northerners were trying to make Kansas free and Southerners were determined to make it a slave state.

In 1854 Senator Douglas had introduced the Kansas-Nebraska bill, creating two separate territories out of the "Platte country," and interpreted the legislation to mean that the people of a territory were to decide by "popular sovereignty" whether they were to have slavery. The bill pleased the South but enraged the North. This measure wiped out the Missouri demarcation line; it made possible the spread of slavery everywhere. President Pierce had signed the measure.

A whirlwind of protest was not long in coming. Lincoln was aroused; he laid aside his law practice and entered the United States senatorial contest as a candidate on the Whig ticket. Two memorable speeches were made by him within a few days in the fall, both in reply to Douglas. The first was at Springfield;[1] the other was at Peoria on October 16, where he made formal announcement of his views on slavery.

Lincoln failed of election by four votes to the legislature which convened in 1855. But the anti-slavery men had scored a victory. Trumbull, an anti-Nebraska Democrat, was chosen Senator through Mr. Lincoln's influence.

In the midst of an increasing turmoil in Kansas, the presidential election of 1856 intervened and the Republican party, founded in 1854, dedicated to freedom and now espoused by Mr. Lincoln, placed its first presidential candidate, John C. Fremont, in the field. Slavery became the burning issue. To conciliate Northern hostility on the Kansas question, James Buchanan, the Democratic nominee, repeatedly declared in unqualified terms that if elected he would secure a fair and free vote in the territory. Nevertheless it was the ballots of the solid South that placed him in office—the popular vote of a minority.

Two days after President Buchanan's inauguration came the stupefying decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case, announcing that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in any territory. To Republicans this was a blow in the face, which hurried the country toward the crisis of civil war. Moreover, it soon became evident that the whole administration was

[1] See Chapter XVI, Twilight in the Old Sangamon Court House.

committed to the Southern policy of slavery expansion.

Meantime, slavery leaders attempted a coup in Kansas by calling the Lecompton convention and framing an instrument which provided for the establishment and perpetuation of slavery. Free settlers refrained from voting and the constitution was adopted "with slavery" by a large majority. Congress had only to give the plan approval. President Buchanan attempted to force the measure through under the party whip. But Senator Douglas rebelled. He adhered to his principle of "popular sovereignty" and would not attempt to force any constitution upon the people of Kansas. His opposition crushed the design. When the free-state people of Kansas submitted the entire constitution in a second election, January 4, 1858, it was overwhelmed. Kansas wanted to be free.

Douglas was soon to be engaged in another struggle more meteoric than his break with the President and his fight against the Lecompton constitution. The people of Illinois in the fall of 1858 were to elect a legislature and one of the duties to be imposed upon it was the selection of a successor to Douglas in the United States Senate. Democratic administration leaders attempted to depose him from power in the party and to defeat him for re-election. Republican leaders in the East felt sure that the course to follow would be to support Douglas, forget his fight for the Kansas-Nebraska bill and only remember his bravery in repudiating the Lecompton pro-slavery document.

But a different opinion was reached by the Republican party of Illinois. In state convention at Springfield, June 16, it declared that "Abraham Lincoln is the first and only choice of the Republicans of

Illinois for the United States Senate as the successor of Stephen A. Douglas." Within a few hours he appeared before the convention in the old Sangamon county court house and in a carefully prepared address accepted the nomination in his ever-famous "house divided against itself" speech.

Leaving his home in Chicago, Senator Douglas immediately set out for a tour of the state. His private train consisted of five platform cars, each carrying a cannon, and a number of passenger cars for the host of followers who escorted him. On the route to Springfield he stopped for a two-hour address at Bloomington, scoring Lincoln for leading a crusade against the Supreme Court because of the Dred Scott decision and accusing him of a desire to have the negroes vote, intermarry with whites, and hold office. Lincoln started to follow the route of Douglas, usually delivering an address the day after. Political acrimony became so bitter over this so-called "jackalling" practice that, on July 24, Lincoln sent Douglas a challenge to joint debates.

There was a delay and an exchange of correspondence. On the morning of July 29, Douglas spoke in Monticello and in the afternoon at Bement. Lincoln again attempted to attract interest to his candidacy by having handbills scattered in Monticello announcing that he would speak there in the afternoon, following Douglas. "Stay and hear the other side." On the way from Bement to Monticello, Lincoln's buggy stuck in the mud, one mile south of the town, and he had to be pulled out by a yoke of oxen. The delay caused a meeting of Lincoln and Douglas—a spot now marked by a twenty-foot pyramid, which was dedicated by the

BEARDSTOWN COURT HOUSE

BRYANT HOUSE, BEMENT

State Historical Society of Illinois in 1918, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the event.

Lincoln jumped out of his buggy and held a conference with Douglas over the debates. Douglas replied that he would stay all night at Bryant's in Bement and would talk it over. That night Lincoln met Douglas in the old Bryant house, which still stands, and arranged a schedule, which was later confirmed by an exchange of correspondence.

These debates are not to be viewed as "sporadic" political happenings. They were the culmination of four years of agitation which had been going on in Illinois over the slavery issue. The debate sites were congressional meeting-places, where the whole controversy was submitted to the people as a jury.

The itinerary as agreed upon was: Ottawa, August 21; Freeport, August 27; Jonesboro, September 15; Charleston, September 18; Galesburg, October 7; Quincy, October 13; Alton, October 15. Every place of meeting has since been marked by a tablet to commemorate the historic event. Good roads lead to all. Edward Erle Sparks' exhaustive book on the debates will prove to be the best guide.

An agreement was reached that the speakers were to introduce the debates alternately, Douglas securing the first opening by his own stipulation. The first speaker was to occupy an hour, the next an hour and a half, and the first to close with a half-hour rejoinder.

At Ottawa the address of neither speaker at the first meeting was in good form. Douglas chided Lincoln for his "house divided against itself" speech and submitted seven questions which Lincoln did not answer there. When the debate was concluded Douglas hur-

ried to his train, waving his hat to the pursuing constituents, followed a few minutes later by several hundred men, in the midst of whom was Lincoln seated on the shoulders of four admirers.

It was to Freeport that all eyes were now turned. Here Lincoln must reply to the questions propounded by Judge Douglas at Ottawa and here he promised "to pay Douglas back in kind."

Politics now became the all-engrossing interest in Illinois. Reduced rates of fare were announced by the railroads running from Chicago to Freeport. People came on foot, on horse-back, and whole families journeyed in lumber wagons, finding their rest at night by the roadside under the silent stars. A cloud of dust in the air marked the highways into town. The meeting-place was crowded with vociferous followers of each camp—talking, discussing, arguing. There was scarcely a place to sit. Country bands furnished music; the streets were gaily decorated; mendicant peddlers were shouting their wares; the throng was noisy—demonstrative as a college football delegation of our own day. Partisan spirit ran high. Some of Lincoln's enthusiastic friends rode around town on a wagon with a huge log aboard, which they attacked vigorously with axes. It was a railsplitting stunt to draw attention to Lincoln's occupation as a young man. Towards noon the jam in the streets of Freeport was augmented by a large delegation from Carroll county; a special train of twelve cars came from Dixon—others followed from Chicago, Rockford, Galena, and Wisconsin.

"All prairiedom has broken loose," wrote one of the New York newspaper correspondents.

Senator Douglas, accompanied by his wife, had ar-

rived amid the thunder of cannon on his own gaily decorated train, early the evening before; was escorted from the depot to the Brewster Hotel by a torchlight procession, and delivered a short address to his admirers. Mr. Lincoln came to Freeport from Dixon about nine o'clock on the morning of the debate, edged his way through a crowd that was shouting itself hoarse and went to his hotel rooms. Delegations were awaiting him. So many wanted to shake hands that he could not give his full time to consultation about the arguments to be presented in the debate. For everyone he had a kind word, a droll remark, and often replied to a question by relating a short story.

Through the day before, he had conferred with a number of Republican leaders including Joseph Medill, Norman B. Judd, and Dr. C. H. Ray, Chicago, over four questions which he intended to ask Douglas. Every adviser opposed the plan. Upon arriving at the hotel he held meeting with others, reading to them the same questions. The second interrogation created a storm of protest:

"Can the people of a United States Territory in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits, prior to the adoption of a state constitution?"

"Nearly all present urged that Mr. Douglas would answer that, under his doctrine of 'Popular Sovereignty,' any territory could by 'unfriendly legislation' exclude slavery, and Mr. Douglas would 'catch the crowd' and beat Mr. Lincoln as a candidate for Senator from Illinois," related General Smith D. Atkins, of Freeport, a participant in the conference. Lincoln

listened attentively to all discussion. He pondered the consequences a long time.

"I don't know how Mr. Douglas will answer," he finally responded. "If he answers that the people of a territory cannot exclude slavery, I will beat him, but if he answers as you say he will, and as I believe he will, he may beat me for Senator, but he will never be President."

Early in the forenoon the debate grounds were crowded. On the outskirts families sat around eating lunches and melons brought from their farms. A rude platform had been erected on the village green, several city blocks from the Stephenson county court house, for the open-air contest. Douglas, always inclined to be spectacular, had planned to drive behind four dappled grey horses to the meeting-place. When Lincoln's friends learned of this, they secured the services of a farmer's "splendid team of six enormous horses and his Conestoga wagon" to carry their candidate. Advised of the ruse, a few minutes before going to the debate, Douglas abandoned his carriage and walked to the speaker's stand with Col. James Mitchell, who later introduced him to the audience.

Great difficulty was experienced by the speakers in reaching the platform. People were anxious to greet the candidates. Promptly at 2 o'clock, Mr. Lincoln opened the debate, having been presented by Thomas Turner. Timekeepers for each side were present. For the first time in his campaign Lincoln stepped before the audience with an air of superiority. He could hardly await the opportunity of putting his question. In less than five minutes he propounded it, looking

down on his audience with sad eyes, and then passed on to a discussion of the issues.

With hesitation, Douglas answered as Lincoln's friends predicted. At once, Douglas' followers were jubilant over the apparent appropriateness of his reply.

"In my opinion," replied Judge Douglas, with an air of artful confidence, "the people of a territory can by lawful means exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a state constitution. It matters not which way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as the abstract question whether slavery may go into the territory under the Constitution, the people have the lawful means to exclude it or to introduce it as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere, unless it is supported by local police regulations."

Prophet and politician had clashed in reasoning. The purpose of Lincoln in asking this question was to force Douglas to abandon either the Dred Scott decision, that slavery could not be excluded from a territory, or his "popular sovereignty" doctrine that the people of a territory had the right to regulate their own affairs. No matter which way Senator Douglas would answer, the result would be damaging to his future aspirations. Among Democratic leaders in both North and South he was looked upon as the probable Democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1860. His answer was a refutation of the Dred Scott decision, to which the South clung with tenacious hope. It was a blow to the power of the slave-holder. The "Freeport Doctrine," as it is now called, sundered the Democratic party. From newspapers and forum in the South, Douglas was immediately denounced as an

"apostate." Meantime, the Northern press sounded praises of Lincoln, not a few predicting that he would lead the Republican party in the presidential campaign of 1860. The other debates did not change events.

Douglas made 130 speeches and expended $80,000 as compared with $1,000 spent by Lincoln.

Douglas was elected Senator by a majority of eight legislative votes. Lincoln had won a popular majority, the total Republican votes cast being 126,084 to 121,940 for the Douglas ticket.

"It hurt too bad to laugh and I am too big to cry," was Lincoln's only comment on the election.

When the debates were over, Lincoln was a national figure, invited to deliver public addresses at Columbus and Cincinnati; at Cooper Union, New York, and in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire. The trail of the new Republican party to power was in the ascendency.

Upon the return of Senator Douglas to Washington, however, he found that he had been deposed by Jefferson Davis from the important territorial committee chairmanship because of the "Freeport Heresy." There was to be no compromise over the schism.

Those who had felt that Lincoln had thrown away his chances for political preferment, when he propounded the "Freeport doctrine," realized their mistake with the disruption of the Democratic convention at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1860. Southern delegates refused to support Senator Douglas for the Presidency because of his answer to Lincoln's question in the Freeport debate. The party was rent into factions—one nominating Douglas. From the outset there was little doubt as to the result.

"Do you recall the argument we had on the way up to Freeport two years ago over the question I was going to ask Judge Douglas?" Lincoln asked Joseph Medill, when the latter went up to visit the President-elect at Springfield late in the fall of 1860.

"Yes," said Medill, "I recollect it very well."

"Don't you think I was right now?"

"We were both right," retorted Medill. "The question hurt Douglas for the Presidency, but it lost you the Senatorship."

"Yes, and I have won the place that he was playing for," was Lincoln's ready answer.

Not for a moment did Senator Douglas sulk. Partisan became patriot. With the opening of the Lincoln administration he offered loyal support, and when the crisis of Fort Sumter came he conferred with the President and then returned to Illinois to place the Douglas democracy of the Mississippi valley solidly behind the Union cause. He died as the result of fatigue and exposure on this western trip and was buried at Chicago. His tomb is located at the foot of Thirty-fifth Street, facing Lake Michigan.

Freeport is no longer the prairie town of 1858. Only a few of the landmarks remain. But with the decades interest in the debate grounds has increased until the spot has become a national shrine. It has been marked by a monument quarried from the age-old hills of Devil's Lake, Wisconsin, where geologists found in the unrecorded eons of time the first indications of land above the sea.

A few blocks from the historic meeting-place, at the entrance of Taylor Park, a heroic statue of "Lincoln the Debater," sculptured by Leonard Crunelle, was un-

veiled on the seventy-first debate anniversary in the summer of 1929. The statue was a gift to Freeport by Mr. W. T. Rawleigh, Freeport businessman, who has long been interested in Lincoln's ideals. It depicts Lincoln in the garb and manner of the time in the act of opening the debate, propounding his famous question. It reveals the face of the Lincoln the prairie people knew, who sought him for wisdom and guidance through the years that Illinois nurtured this genius.

Into Freeport's schools, her factories and places of business have gone the spirit of devotion and sentiments of reverence for a place made memorable by the words of a nation's leaders in the country's crisis. About this shrine, people gather on patriotic occasions; to all passers-by who read its bronzed tablet it becomes a benediction for higher ideals of citizenship and service.

CHAPTER XII

COOPER UNION A BEACON LIGHT

COOPER UNION, a dark stone building begrimed with dust and age, overlooking New York's Bowery, is the scene of a political triumph for Abraham Lincoln which helped him immeasurably to win the Presidency of the United States. The opportunity to deliver an address in this open forum for untrammeled ideas afforded the occasion to convince the East that his views on slavery were sensible and sound. His motive in coming to New York also blended well with the purpose of spreading enlightenment for which Cooper Union was founded.

One gains a lively conception of the mission of this institution by an early morning visit to it when thousands of girls and boys from the working-classes are arriving for free instruction in engineering, art, political economy and other branches of study. Still holding to the original ideals of its founder, it maintains day and evening classes and free library and reading rooms, with courses of free lectures on divers subjects. Commercial rivals of the eccentric philanthropist and builder of "Tom Thumb," the first passenger locomotive ever seen in this country, frankly labeled Cooper Union, completed only a few months before the coming of Mr. Lincoln, "Peter Cooper's swindle." When the students began to enroll and the free lecture hall was crowded weekly, criticism ceased. Lincoln's

speech soon became one of its fondest traditions. In a city of expanding educational facilities Cooper Union holds high the torch of knowledge for thousands of homes where education might not otherwise enter.[1]

My desire to visit the place was doubly stimulated by reading the story told by Robert T. Lincoln. During the fall of 1859 he had been sent to Harvard, but failing in fifteen of the sixteen subjects at the entrance examination, he had gone to Phillips Academy at Exeter, New Hampshire, for further preparation. Before this tutorage was ended he was visited by his father. Anxious to learn about his son's progress, Abraham Lincoln decided to accept the invitation he had received during the fall to speak in New York. It would afford an opportunity to see how Robert was progressing.[2]

Robert T. Lincoln in after life declared that had he not failed in his Harvard examinations, his father might not have delivered the Cooper Union speech and others in New England. Had Robert been admitted to Harvard, his father might have declined the New York invitation, although this seems improbable. Through this twist of fate the East heard the message three months before he was nominated. It was Robert's belief that his own shortcomings made his father President, in that it induced him to come East and gain a footing where he was as yet little known.

Discouraged by his failure to be elected United States Senator after his debates with Senator Douglas in 1858, Mr. Lincoln returned to his law practice burdened with debt. In an effort to increase his earnings

[1] Ford, James L., *Cooper Union*, a brochure issued by the institution.
[2] Barton, W. E., *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. 1, p. 407.

he prepared a lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions," which was delivered in a few towns in Illinois, but his subject failed to catch the popular imagination.

People outside of Illinois had become interested in his personality and his slavery ideas. The nation wanted to hear him. He accepted an invitation to make an address at the Wisconsin State Fair at Milwaukee on September 30, 1859, which has attracted wide attention in recent years because of his early advocacy of scientific agriculture.[1] Later in the fall he delivered political speeches in Ohio, at Columbus and Cincinnati, using the theme of his debates with Senator Douglas as the thread of his argument. They attracted so much favorable notice that for the first time all of his debate speeches were gathered and published in booklet form by a Columbus firm. During December he visited Kansas, addressing audiences at Atchison, Troy and Leavenworth, using the essentials from his slavery debates. Instead of Lincoln being neglected in defeat, he was now looked upon as a national leader in the cause opposed to slavery expansion.

Political changes were in the air. The Republican party was in its infancy. But its doctrines were little understood in the East. A group of young men in New York conferred with Henry C. Bowen, editor of *The Independent,* over the selection of some Western man to present the views of the new party to a meeting in Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. Mr. Lincoln was suggested. An invitation was sent offering $200 for a speech, and he accepted. He asked to be allowed to deliver a political speech. Sensing the greater public

[1] Olson, Julius E., "Lincoln in Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Magazine of History,* Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, September, 1920.

interest, it was arranged to transfer the meeting to Cooper Union, which then offered the largest auditorium in New York. Lincoln accurately measured the possibilities of the opportunity.

"That speech required much time in its preparation," asserts Henry B. Rankin, a law student in Mr. Lincoln's office.[1] "And so Lincoln gave less and less attention to his office duties, although when he was needed to present a case in court, he succeeded in grasping the details of intricate evidence from others with remarkable quickness."

It was late in February, 1860, when Lincoln left Springfield, arriving in New York on the Saturday afternoon preceding the Monday evening's speech of February 27 in Cooper Union. He went directly to Mr. Bowen's office, then on Ann Street, near Nassau.

"Is this Henry C. Bowen?" asked Lincoln as he pushed the editorial sanctum door open to see a man busy at his desk.

"It is," declared the editor, still bowed over a manuscript.

"I am Abraham Lincoln."

With that response the editor looked up. Before him stood a tall man, in a wrinkled suit, carrying a much-worn carpet bag, appearing tired and travel worn. He was invited to a chair, but said he would rest on the lounge while talking. With difficulty Bowen concealed his disappointed feelings. The unfavorable appearance was soon dissipated, however, by the visitor's scintillating conversation. Bowen invited him to attend on the following morning Plymouth

[1] Rankin, Henry B., *Intimate Character Sketches of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 174-181.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN

Church of which the famous Henry Ward Beecher was pastor. After accepting, Mr. Lincoln returned to the Astor House.

"Our first visit must be to Plymouth Church," my companion suggested, when we went to New York to see the places associated with Mr. Lincoln.

"We shall not be able to 'cross Fulton Ferry and follow the crowd,' as Lincoln was directed," I suggested. "The church is now reached over the Manhattan bridge."

The red group of buildings radiated a welcome in the morning sun. Passing decades have turned Plymouth Church, crowding the narrow public street in Brooklyn, into an expansive institution, serving all. Within its rooms once rang fiery words from the lips of the mighty Beecher. His eloquence gave Plymouth Church a luster that still draws visitors from every nation of the world. In its early years his sermons on the moral and political issues of the slavery struggle gave it a foremost place in the public mind. Many of these appearing in *The Independent* had stirred Mr. Lincoln. Three weeks before Lincoln's visit, Mr. Beecher, to arouse public sentiment against slavery, had sold the nine-year-old slave girl, Sarah Maria Diggs,[1] in the Plymouth pulpit to raise $900 to purchase her freedom. Such a scene fired men more than could any oratory.

Plymouth Church was the one place in New York that Mr. Lincoln desired to see. Its regular attendants had an unutterable hatred of human bondage. With them he would feel at home. When it was announced

[1] Afterwards known as Rose Ward Hunt. She died in Washington, D. C., Oct. 25, 1928.

that he was in the congregation, a large number of enthusiastic people who shared his ideals gathered about the Bowen pew to meet him. An informal reception was held. The seat occupied by him at the service has since been appropriately marked;[1] a memorial end-window was installed in 1907 showing him writing the Emancipation Proclamation. The edifice seems heavy with memories of the long fight for freedom.

Passing out of the church in company with Mr. Beecher and several others, Mr. Bowen remarked that he expected Lincoln to remain with him for Sunday dinner. For a moment Lincoln hesitated.

"You will have to excuse me, Mr. Bowen," he finally answered. "I should enjoy meeting your friends, but I have not fully prepared my speech for Monday evening and I must return to my hotel to work on it."

Slowly through heavy traffic we retraced our way to where the Bowery divides into Third and Fourth Streets. I wondered, as I stood before Cooper Union, whether Mr. Lincoln may not have looked back to this institution as the turning point in his political fortunes. Away from the haunts of fashion, the building rears high its clock tower like a beacon lighting the way of educational advance for the lowly. One likes to muse for the moment over the hum of the streets and watch every hour the double tide of students, filling the rear high archway. They tread in the footsteps of Lincoln.

The old building itself is interesting, but not remarkable for its style of architecture. It was the fore-

[1] Pew No. 89 in which Mr. Lincoln sat on February 26, 1860, is now marked with a silver plate.

runner of the modern skyscraper. When completed in 1859 it was the tallest in the town, with the exception of the city hall and certain churches. Within its basement was arranged the first auditorium dedicated to free speech in America, and it has ever since remained open to all orderly gatherings. Set in a meager diamond point, the structure appears in humility surrounded by others more metropolitan. Nothing could be more in keeping with its associations.

We were anxious to see the auditorium, and fortunately I found the attendant in the basement. He opened the door and stood waiting an explanation.

"Interested in Lincoln?" he asked.

"That's why we came," I answered, slipping into a seat at the side of the rostrum.

"I thought so. Lincoln spoke from that high platform, but it then stood at the far end of the auditorium. The chair in which he sat is still in the building."

Within this low-ceilinged room, affording a seating capacity of perhaps 1,200, Abraham Lincoln delivered one of the most remarkable addresses of his life. Editors, clergymen, statesmen and businessmen were there. In the audience were the educated people of New York. He was escorted to the platform by Horace Greeley and introduced by William Cullen Bryant, the poet, who presided.

"Mr. Cheerman," said Lincoln after facing his audience and turning to address the presiding officer, using the vernacular of the West.[1]

"Old fellow, you won't do," thought many a listener. "That's very well out West but it won't do in New York."

[1] Brooks, Noah, *Abraham Lincoln and the Downfall of Slavery*, p. 186.

Soon he warmed to his subject and the listeners forgot his ponderous hands, his ill-fitting suit, the upstanding shock of heavy hair, his somewhat gawky appearance as he towered so high above his audience. Without story or anecdote, he was making a legal argument. A majority of the signers of the Constitution, he said, believed that Congress was empowered with the duty to exclude slavery from the territories. He traced their reasoning. Now his words came like fire.

"When he spoke he was transfigured before us," said Joseph H. Choate, later ambassador to Great Britain, who with the Rev. Lyman Abbott, another listener, addressed a commemoration audience in Cooper Union.[1] "His eyes kindled, his voice rang, his face shone and seemed to light up the whole assembly as by an electric flash. For an hour and more he held his audience in the hollow of his hand. His style of speech and manner of delivery were severely simple."

It is difficult to comprehend the portent of Lincoln's speech without seeing the hall and visioning those critical personages of influence and power in the affairs of the nation who came to hear his words. Preconceived notions of his radicalism were swept away. He pleaded with the South to be reasonable; he denied that the Republicans believed in insurrection and exonerated his party from any connection with the raid of John Brown, which had occurred but a few months before. Lincoln did not follow the unbending abolitionists. He asked for little.[2] He wanted only what the "fathers" had granted. He pleaded in this wise:

[1] Nathan W. MacChesney, in *The Tributes of a Century,* reprints the speeches of Mr. Choate and Mr. Abbott made at Cooper Union, Feb. 9, 1909, pp. 277-293.

[2] George Haven Putnam's *Abraham Lincoln* contains a reprint of the

"Even though much provoked let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. . . . .

"Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the National Territories, and to overrun us here in these Free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty, fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophisticated contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored—contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong, vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man—such a policy of 'don't care' on a question about which all true men do care—such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance—such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said, and undo what Washington did.

"Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the Government nor of dungeons to ourselves."

I laid aside the volume from which I had been reading and gazed about the room. A certain consonance between the words of the speech and the stirring events which followed was immediately apparent. My companion had gone away with the attendant and I could

original publication of the speech with notes approved by Lincoln, pp. 207-288.

hear their muffled words down the lobby. Looking again at the platform, I saw for the first time the closing words of Lincoln's address lettered in gold on a white marble slab at the apex of the stage, just above the reader's desk:

> LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH, LET US TO THE END DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT.
> —ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

As I arose to go I touched the switch, leaving the auditorium again in darkness. In an intimate sense this dream of stone and masonry had become an animated memorial to Lincoln's devotion to the Union. As I left the building, I remembered that after the speech the members of the Young Men's Central Republican Union took Mr. Lincoln to the Athenæum, where a simple supper was served to less than a dozen people, several of them members of the club who had not heard the address. Little did they realize that within three months their guest would be nominated for President. One reminiscence[1] of that evening is recorded:

"The supper was informal—as informal as anything could be; the conversation was easy and familiar; the prospects of the Republican party in the coming struggle were talked over, and so little was it supposed by the gentlemen who had not heard the address that Mr. Lincoln could possibly be the candidate that one of them, Mr. Charles W. Elliott, asked artfully: 'Mr. Lincoln, what candidate do you really think would be most likely to carry Illinois?' Mr. Lincoln answered by illustration: 'Illinois is a peculiar state in three parts. In northern Illinois, Mr. Seward would have a

[1] Putnam, *Ibid.*, p. 218.

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COOPER UNION SQUARE

larger majority than I could get. In middle Illinois, I think I could call out a larger vote than Mr. Seward. In southern Illinois, it would make no difference who was the candidate.' "

Mr. Lincoln already had his eyes on the Presidency. He had this vision before his mind when he delivered his address at Cooper Union a few hours before. He was wondering what the reception by the public would be. Four papers in New York published his speech the next day. Horace Greeley commended it. It resulted in Mr. Lincoln being called to Connecticut to participate in the spring campaign. Eleven unscheduled speeches were made in New England within the next few days, at Providence and Woonsocket, Rhode Island; Manchester, Exeter, Dover, and Concord, New Hampshire; and Hartford, Meriden, New Haven, Bridgeport, and Norwalk, Connecticut. His Connecticut addresses undoubtedly elected Governor Buckingham, his warm Republican friend.

When Lincoln returned home he was encouraged in the belief that he had a chance to be nominated. The East had given him a sympathetic hearing.

When the deadlock with Seward came in the Chicago convention in May, Connecticut was one of the first Eastern states to swing to Lincoln. Then others followed.

"Lincoln's speech at Cooper Union, after his controversy with Douglas, settled the question of the Republican presidential candidate," observed Henry Ward Beecher.[1]

Cooper Union is the living rock upon which the nation's first recognition of Abraham Lincoln rests.

[1] Rice, Allen T., *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 247.

CHAPTER XIII

FIRST PRESIDENTIAL ENDORSEMENT AT DECATUR

RAIL fences have disappeared from the vicinity of Decatur. For two hours I toured the by-roads of Macon county west of the city hoping that one might be discovered. Not a splinter was to be found on a division line; not a standard that might have held the rails in position. Even the entrance to the little back-from-the-road farm on the Sangamon river, where in 1830 Abraham Lincoln had split rails and helped to make a clearing for his father's first home in Illinois, is guarded by a modern fence and a swinging gate. Then I made some inquiries.

"Carloads of rails were shipped out of here to the East, after Mr. Lincoln was nominated for the Presidency," said the manager of the Scroggin estate of which the early Lincoln homestead is now a part.

"You know Mr. Lincoln split many rails for fencing two or three farms around here and when the Illinois State Convention endorsed him for President thirty years later at Decatur it went into a frenzy of rail-splitting enthusiasm that spread all over the country. A man from Philadelphia came here and bought most of them, but it is doubtful if even a small part were ever mauled into shape by Mr. Lincoln."

From the quiet farmyard of the old Lincoln home, rank with a tangle of smartweed, untidy with scattered pieces of farm machinery, a dozen spreading elms

shading the marked spot where once stood the log cabin, the smoke of Decatur ten miles to the east was discernible on the skyline. The returning two miles of country highway to Harristown are deep with dust, but the remainder of the way is all cement. Over this same way Mr. Lincoln often trudged afoot.

A picture of the approach would show a pleasant panorama of roofs and spires. But in spite of all the changes of time, the disfigurements of industry and progress, Decatur clings to its traditions. Down the main thoroughfare I drove to a sudden widening of the street, appropriately called Lincoln Square—small as it is—with an overshadowed, squatty, little tabernacle building like an oasis in the center. When I parked my car nearby it was before a sign that told how the Lincoln family on this very spot had paused for a last night's camping in the spring of 1830 during their trek to found a new home in Illinois. Already I was on historic ground.[1]

Among the most treasured of Decatur's relics is a gabled, two-story log structure built in 1829 and long used as a court house. Within recent years it was crowded from its central city location to Fairview Park. If in the past Decatur has been too anxious to serve the ways of development, today she guards the old building with a care and reverence little short of religious. An attendant on the ground relates many stories of inspiring events associated with the place.

Well authenticated tradition has it that the first speech made by Mr. Lincoln was in this vicinity. The story is furnished by John Hanks, his companion at work during the fall and winter of 1830.

[1] Site located by Mr. Lincoln for Henry C. Whitney in 1856.

"After Abe got to Decatur, or rather to Macon county," wrote Mr. Hanks in recording the event, "a man by the name of Posey came into our neighborhood and made a speech. It was a bad one and I said Abe could beat it. I turned down a box and Abe made his speech. The other man was a candidate—Abe wasn't. Abe beat him to death, his subject being the navigation of the Sangamon river. The man, after Abe's speech was through, took him aside and asked him where he had learned so much and how he could do so well. Abe replied, stating his manner and method of reading, and what he had read. The man encouraged him to persevere."

When this city deigns to play the pageant of her past she will have every romantic element to portray —pioneer and builder, growth and business. It will marshal in parade the coming of Abraham Lincoln, "the railsplitter," entering manhood; his later frequent returns on the circuit; his stories told around the court house; his meeting with the Free State editors on Washington's birthday in 1856 to found a new party, and will climax it all with his singularly picturesque endorsement for President. The recounting of his extraordinary talents will make a scene that will strike the beholder with profound admiration. The material has all been collected and awaits the touch of the dramatist.

Someone told me that my visit would be facilitated by a visit to the Lincoln rooms in the public library. I went asking direction to the site of the convention meeting-place that first endorsed Mr. Lincoln. I delayed there to examine the Jane Hamand collection until an attendant informed me that the closing hour had passed. It is one of the finest treasures of Lin-

colniana in the country—remarkably complete with pictured scenes and material on Ann Rutledge, Lincoln's "first love."

It was there that I found the story of the convention told by Richard J. Oglesby, then an aspiring young lawyer of the town, who planned its dramatic climax, and the description of what occurred as remembered by Speaker Joseph G. Cannon, an onlooker.[1]

There had been some mention of Abraham Lincoln for President in the newspapers following the debates with Douglas. An Ohio editor had endorsed him, but he did not seriously consider that there was any movement for him.

"I must in all candor say I do not think myself fit for the Presidency," he wrote to an Illinois friend in April, 1859.

But the invitation to deliver an address at Cooper Institute, February 27, 1860, and his subsequent tour of New England to visit his son Robert in school at Exeter gave him encouragement. He returned to Springfield confirmed in the belief that the intense rivalry between William H. Seward of New York and Salmon P. Chase of Ohio, the two leading candidates, might result in the selection of a dark horse. Hope became a possibility. Herndon writes:

"It was apparent now to Lincoln that the presidential nomination was within his reach. He began gradually to lose his interest in the law and to trim his political sails at the same time. His recent success had

[1] J. McCan Davis's *How Abraham Lincoln Became President* contains interview with Governor Oglesby; Jane Martin Johns' *Personal Recollections 1849-1865,* printed by Decatur Chapter Daughters of American Revolution, 1912; Speech by Joseph G. Cannon on Abraham Lincoln, Feb. 12, 1910, printed in appendix to the *Congressional Record,* Sixty-first Congress, Second session.

stimulated his self-confidence to unwonted proportions. He wrote to influential party workers everywhere. I know the idea prevails that Lincoln sat still in his chair at Springfield, and that one of those unlooked-for tides in human affairs came along and cast the nomination in his lap, but any man who has had experience in such things knows that great political prizes are not obtained in that way. The truth is, Lincoln was as vigilant as he was ambitious, and there is no denying the fact that he understood the situation perfectly from the start. In the management of his own interests he was obliged to rely almost entirely on his own resources. He had no money with which to maintain a political bureau and he lacked any kind of personal organization whatever. Seward had all these things, and, behind them all, a brilliant record in the United States Senate with which to dazzle his followers. But with all his prestige and experience the latter was no more adroit and no more untiringly in pursuit of his ambition than the man who had just delivered the Cooper Institute speech." [1]

Illinois itself was divided. The Seward leaders found strong sentiment for their candidate in former Whig territory in the northern part of the state and there was a growing feeling that he had the band wagon. So far, no state had pledged a single delegate for Mr. Lincoln and without the endorsement of Illinois his chances might be lost. He appealed to Norman B. Judd in a letter on February 9, 1860, to help him in the northern counties, saying that it "would hurt not to get the Illinois delegation."

There is one thing that Judd did which aided Mr.

[1] Herndon, *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 457.

Lincoln as much as a pledged delegation. As a member of the Republican National Committee he secured the convention for Chicago. The meeting would be held where Mr. Lincoln had friends. That single stroke heartened the Lincoln "favorite son" movement in Illinois. There was now a fighting chance.

Events followed quickly. The Republican State Central Committee of Illinois issued a call for a state convention to be held at Decatur on May 9, 1860. The Republicans of Sangamon county responded promptly and held a local convention, named five delegates to the Decatur meeting and adopted a resolution declaring that "our distinguished fellow citizen, the tall pioneer of Sangamon county, Abraham Lincoln, is our first choice for President of the United States."

Mr. Lincoln had a feeling that his political opponents would train their guns upon the Decatur state convention to wrest it, if possible, from him. He decided to attend it in person. Maybe his presence would stem the tide. It was a strategic move.

Unknown to him, a little act in a play had been plotted and rehearsed under the direction of "Dick" Oglesby, later governor of the state, that when staged was to stir the heart of the nation. Oglesby was a daring, resourceful, astute young lawyer in Decatur who had known Mr. Lincoln for more than twenty years and was thoroughly convinced of his presidential availability.[1] He knew the story of Lincoln's poverty. It had been an inspiration to him in his own work.

The coming convention gave Oglesby a problem that troubled him. It was disturbing others also but he did

[1] Oglesby's life story is romantic. See L. White Busbey's *Uncle Joe Cannon*, pp. 88-92.

not seek their counsel. If he could only find the solution it would make him politically. He foresaw that unless something heroic was done, the Illinois delegation would go to the Republican National Convention divided—the division spelled defeat.

One day he met John Hanks, always a Democrat, but an old friend of Lincoln's and his flatboating companion on the expedition down the Mississippi.

"I've been looking a week for you to ask you a question," Oglesby began.

"Well, I'm here now. What is it?" drawled the deep-chested pioneer.

"Didn't you split rails with Abe Lincoln down on the flats near the Sangamon, when he moved with his father and family into Illinois?"

"Yes, every day," John responded.

"Do you suppose there are any of those rails still in the fences?"

"Plenty of them." John was now growing reminiscent. "That was back in the summer of 1830. Abe and I cleared fifteen acres. We split the rails and fenced the farm. Ten years ago I was down there and they were as good as ever. Walnut rails last a long time."

"I'll see you tomorrow, John," rejoined Oglesby and left for his office. He was on a live trail. His scheme was beginning to unfold.

The next day Oglesby and John Hanks visited the old Lincoln home.[1] The fences were still standing. John took a knife and peeled off a splinter.

[1] After Mr. Lincoln's assassination in 1865, James Shoaff, publisher of the *Decatur Magnet*, removed the cabin to Boston and with John Hanks exhibited it on the Boston Common. Later it was taken to Chicago and exhibited and then sold to an English syndicate. It was lost at sea en route to some foreign city.

"It's black walnut," and he handed the shaving to Oglesby. Then he took him to the spot where the trees had been chopped. There were the stumps. The evidence was conclusive.

Tying two of the rails under the axle-tree of the single buggy, but allowing the ends to drag along on the ground, they took them back to town and stored them in a barn close to the convention meeting-place. On the way home they planned their act in detail.

"Don't tell anyone about this until the time comes," admonished Oglesby. "I shall want you to bring those rails before the convention at my signal."

"I'll be ready," was the hearty response of the genial graybeard, who saw visions of his own recognition.

Meantime Decatur had built a wigwam for the meeting. It was a crude, flat-roofed affair, erected in the street between two brick buildings of boards borrowed from the lumber companies and covered with boughs from the forest. The ends of the building were left open. Its height was so low that the taller delegates easily touched the ceiling and Mr. Lincoln found it more comfortable to remain seated.

After a day had been spent in meeting and organizing, Oglesby announced in a mysterious manner that an old Democrat desired to make a contribution to the convention. Delegates stood up, craning their necks and asking questions, to catch the significance of the announcement.

The signal had been given. In walked John Hanks, tall, broad-shouldered, proud, bearing on his shoulder the two rails to which a banner had been attached with this inscription:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
THE RAIL CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN 1860.
TWO RAILS FROM A LOT OF 3,000 MADE IN 1830 BY JOHN HANKS
AND ABE LINCOLN, WHOSE FATHER WAS THE FIRST
PIONEER OF MACON COUNTY

Hanks proceeded down the aisle, spoke to Mr. Lincoln as he passed and plodded toward the speaker's stand. The convention went wild. In a moment, the exaltation rose to supreme heights. The scene became boisterous, then jubilant.

"Lincoln! Lincoln!" came shouts from all parts of the hall. But Lincoln remained in his seat caught by a momentary surprise.

"Tell us about the rails," shouted others. "Examine them! Do they bear your mark?"

People were standing now. The tumult was increasing. They were crowding and pushing toward the platform. There was a frenzy of interest.

"The American people always reaching out for something that will touch the popular heart found it there," wrote Speaker Cannon, who witnessed the scene. "The crowd closed up and the cry came for Lincoln. He could not get through; and great, tall, gaunt man as he was, they literally picked him up and passed him over their heads."

Standing before that audience, which could hardly suppress its emotional exuberance, Mr. Lincoln could not quiet the roar for some time. Then he spoke soberly; there was not a smile.

"Gentlemen: I suppose you want to know something about these rails. Well, the truth is, John Hanks and I did make rails in the Sangamon bottom. I don't know whether we made those rails or not; fact is I don't think they are a credit to the maker [and his awkward frame

shook with laughter]; but I know this, I made rails then and I think I could make better ones than those now."

The rail candidacy had become a reality. With the execution of that maneuver the hope of the Seward men withered. When Mr. Lincoln had finished, John M. Palmer was on his feet with a resolution declaring that "Abraham Lincoln is the first choice of the Republican party of Illinois for the Presidency," and instructing the delegates to the Chicago convention "to use all honorable means to secure his nomination and to cast the vote of the state as a unit for him."

Congressman Thomas J. Turner of Freeport attacked the resolution but it was adopted with a whoop. The greatest political convention coup in history had been played—and won. The ghost of a "divided delegation" vanished. The two days' convention was at an end.

In its wake came a sweep of popular sentiment that thrilled the country. The fence rail as a symbol and the railsplitter as a slogan made a magnetic appeal for Mr. Lincoln that helped to capture the presidential nomination ten days later at Chicago.

With my head full of these stirring convention stories I left the library to hasten in search of "the little park on a hill not far from the court house," described as being near the place where these events had transpired. Evening, soft and hazy, was spreading its restful mantle. People were lounging on park benches. My questions seemed to disturb them, for they had not heard of the old wigwam. Close to the former entrance I read a tablet that chronicled the first meeting of the

G.A.R. of the nation.[1] I remembered that the two spots were near together. The narrow, brick-paved South State Street where the wigwam had stood was deserted. On the rear wall of the Millikan Bank building I read in the shadows:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S
NAME WAS FIRST MENTIONED FOR
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
AT THE ILLINOIS STATE CONVENTION HELD
IN THE WIGWAM ERECTED IN THIS STREET
MAY 10, 1860

For a while I rested in nearby Central Park. In the quiet, the whole scene before me seemed articulate with its own story. With the assuaging draughts in the gloaming, cool and seductive, one feels the spirit of long ago crowding the mind with irresistible force. Vision a fence rail that has become the symbol of a crusade—then a delegation of a few determined men espousing a leader, little known, seeking to capture for him the nomination for the Presidency of the United States at a national convention—an almost preposterous idea. Imagine all this and then tell me if the memory of a visit to the spot, where the rail convention's brief flame became the fire of the tongues of men, should not last a lifetime!

[1] Birthplace of Grand Army of the Republic, organized at 253 South Park Street, Decatur, April 6, 1866, by Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson.

CHAPTER XIV

A TABLET ON A CHICAGO GROCERY HOUSE

CHICAGO'S voice is like the accent of a national party convention. Beginning in the morning in a low tone, the crescendo by noonday is in a pitch that rolls and swells like the white, anger-tossed breakers along its Lake Michigan shoreline. The vibrant sound of the city resembles a convention's mood—always restless, growing hourly more animated and then wild with mad desire. At night the voice becomes low, but is never quiet.

"How like the voice of the Republican National Convention that nominated Lincoln for President, May 19, 1860," suggested my companion. Together we had just read a letter of Leonard Swett, a Lincoln supporter, describing the scene. We had paused at the intersection of Lake and Market streets, near the site of the Wigwam, the meeting-place of the convention, three blocks from the Chicago and Northwestern passenger station, to listen to the roar of the loop. The rumble of trucks from wholesale houses in the vicinity and the thunder of an Oak Park elevated train echoed a fresh outburst of sound. I remember that in the confusion I tried to read a marked passage from Swett's letter:

"A thousand steam whistles, ten acres of hotel gongs, a tribe of Comanches, headed by a choice vanguard from pandemonium, might have mingled in the scene unnoticed."

"The sound is still here anyway," my companion remarked, "even though the old Wigwam has been razed."

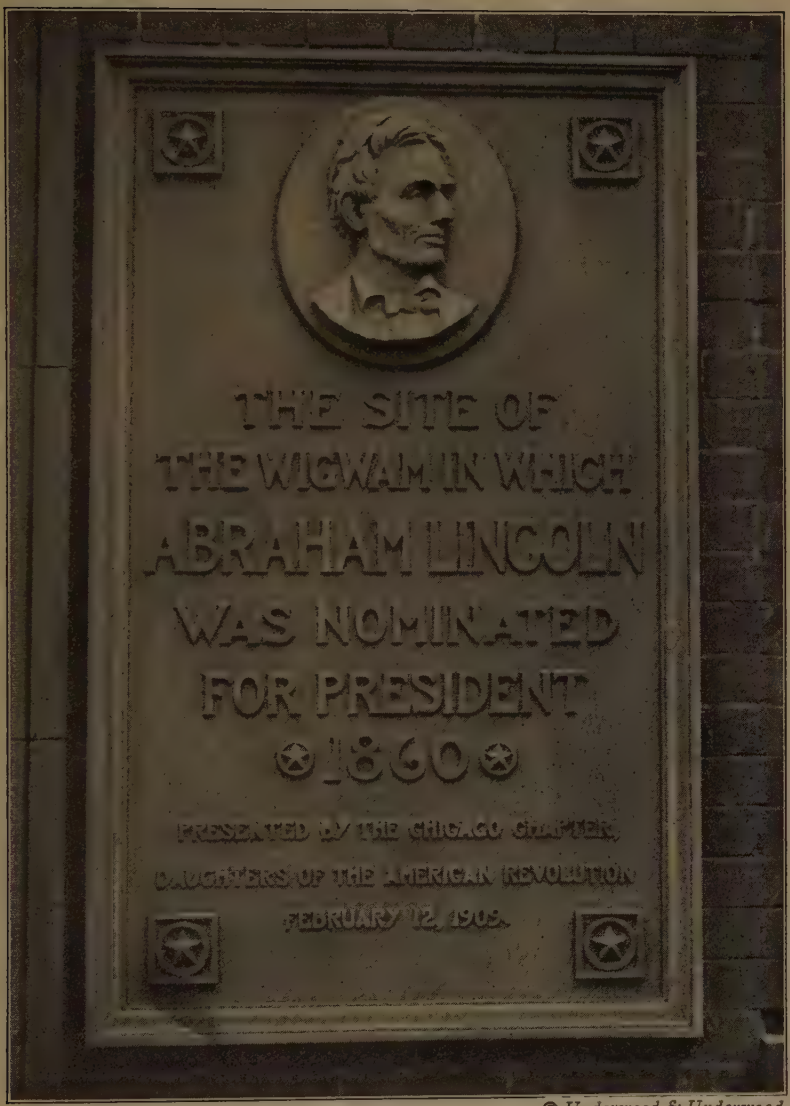
Just around the corner from Market street, on a red brick, wholesale grocery house we found a bronze tablet which read:

THE SITE OF
THE WIGWAM IN WHICH
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WAS NOMINATED
FOR PRESIDENT
1860
PRESENTED BY THE CHICAGO CHAPTER
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,
FEBRUARY 12, 1909.

On my pilgrimage to the Wigwam site I had taken a copy of Swett's letter, considered by many as the best description of Mr. Lincoln's nomination, and a pamphlet published by the Chicago Historical Society written by Addison G. Proctor, of Kansas, the last surviving delegate to the convention. Better still, I had a vivid recollection of an interview with Mr. M. P. Rindlaub, a veteran editor of Platteville, Wisconsin, who had been an enthusiastic spectator.

"When the convention first assembled it seemed evident that William H. Seward of New York would be chosen," Mr. Rindlaub had told me. "But the first ballot revealed that Seward's chief competitor was the 'railsplitter' from Illinois."

Fate had given Lincoln an advantage. Through the efforts of Norman B. Judd, Chicago, a member of the National Committee from Illinois, the West was recognized by the new movement and the convention went to Chicago. Lincoln was not enough of a candidate at that time to draw the opposition of his opponents. Among



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TABLET ON SITE OF 1860 CONVENTION

long lists of possibilities published in Eastern papers his name was seldom mentioned.

Alluring inducements were offered. A convention hall would be provided with ample seating capacity. To fulfill this promise the old Sauganash Hotel was torn down and a frame, tinder-box barrack, called the Wigwam, with accommodations for 10,000 people, was built on its site.

"The Republicans have built a great structure which they call a Wigwam," wrote Horace Greeley to *The New York Tribune.* "God help the Indians if they ever lived in as ugly a building as this." I paced off the dimensions, one hundred by one-hundred-eighty feet, and discovered that probably ten Wigwams could be placed conveniently within the Chicago Coliseum, the present overcrowded convention building.

But in 1860 the Wigwam was one of the most commodious halls in the whole country, and the convention which came had the largest attendance assembled by any political party up to that time. There is little in common between Chicago then and today—except the superb willingness to act as host. There are now more than sixty cities in the United States having a population of over 110,000, which Chicago then boasted. It had forty-two hotels, fifteen railroads and nearly one thousand saloons and free-lunch counters. Its free and easy way was characteristic of its pioneer hospitality. It bade a welcome as though its accommodations were limitless.

Built in a marsh, it had become necessary for the city to pull itself out of the mire, and when the invitation to the convention was extended half of the buildings were hoisted on piles. The proprietor of the Tremont

House, at the corner of Lake and Dearborn Streets, later the headquarters for the Lincoln delegates was worried over the new municipal order.

"How can I get this building raised in time for the convention?" he inquired of a stranger from the East.

"I'll do it for you, and your guests will not lose a single meal or a wink of sleep."

"Go to it," responded the proprietor.

Nearly one thousand men were employed and five thousand jackscrews were placed under the building. When the job was finished, George M. Pullman, of later sleeping-car fame, had won his first laurels in Chicago.

The inconveniences of slanting sidewalks and tilted entrances to buildings were overcome by the prevailing enthusiasm. The Wigwam was gaily decorated as were many of the business places. Accompanying the 466 delegates were nearly 40,000 strangers, who had come to use their lungs for their favorites.

Surveying the streets and buildings in the immediate vicinity of the Wigwam site, I fancied I breathed the atmosphere of the convention; felt its throbbing note of enthusiasm; sensed its intensity. The words of the editor who told me of its scenes rang in my ears. Over there, where a red brick wall runs high, was the entrance through which surged an anxious people, tense with purpose. Around this corner, a larger crowd awaited hourly some manifestation of victory which it might share.

Until a week before the Chicago convention no delegates had been pledged to Mr. Lincoln. The leverage of having the convention at Chicago, and the picturesque presentation at the state convention May 10 in

Decatur of some of the rails he had split in the winter of 1830, secured him a pledged Illinois delegation of twenty-two votes.

"There were eight who would gladly have gone for Seward," Mr. Swett has written.

Upon the delegation of this single state; the advantage of meeting-place; the hostility of Seward's enemies, including Horace Greeley of *The New York Tribune,* and the enthusiasm of Mr. Lincoln's old circuit friends and neighbors, his force was felt before the convention was called to order on May 16. Lincoln himself found little hope.

"I think the Illinois delegation will be unanimous for me from the start, and no other delegation will," he wrote a few days before the meeting. "A few other individuals in other delegations would like to be for me, but may be restrained by their colleagues. It is represented to me by men who ought to know that the whole of Indiana might not be difficult to get."

Reduced railroad fares brought both the interested and curious onlooker. Delegations began to arrive a week in advance—professional politicians, half the members of Congress, nine hundred newspapermen among whom the white-visaged face of Horace Greeley was the most conspicuous; sponsors of the several candidates, and a motley crowd of men who were paid to march and cheer. With the New York delegation came two thousand Seward men; Pennsylvania sent five hundred, and there were large contingents from other eastern states. An effort was being made to transmute the voice of the numbers into a response from delegations. A new deal was being made in the politics of

the nation, and those who could afford it came to see what was doing.

Down the same streets where Chicago skyscrapers now strive for the luxury of light and air there marched parades and bands for William H. Seward, for Salmon P. Chase of Ohio, for Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, and for Abraham Lincoln. Soap-box orators claimed every corner.

Headquarters for Mr. Lincoln were opened at the Tremont House, four blocks down Lake Street. Two tablets have been erected. The one marking the site reads:

UPON THIS SITE
STOOD THE
TREMONT HOUSE
WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE
OCTOBER 9, 1871.
IN THAT BUILDING
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WAS A GUEST WHEN IN CHICAGO,
AND THERE, ON JULY 10, 1858,
HE ADDRESSED THE PEOPLE FROM
ITS BALCONY AND, ON JULY 24,
1858, WROTE THE CHALLENGE
WHICH RESULTED IN THE
DOUGLAS-LINCOLN DEBATES.
THESE TABLETS WERE PRESENTED
BY THE CITIZENS OF CHICAGO
FEBRUARY 12, 1909, IN COMMEMORATION
OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE BIRTH OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A second tablet contains a quotation from a Lincoln speech at Alton, October 15, 1858:

"That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles

that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle."

Never was a group of managers more energetic and determined. Judge David Davis, portly, genial and keen, of the old Eighth Circuit, was head of the strategists. Important missionary work among other delegations was also done by Leonard Swett, N. B. Judd, Richard Oglesby, Judge Stephen T. Logan, John M. Palmer and Jesse W. Fell. This group did more to capture the Presidency for Mr. Lincoln than all others. Lawyer friends and the plain people from the prairies, who had served on juries and heard Lincoln plead cases, swarmed the corridors. At least they could shout loudly for Mr. Lincoln and they did. To allay opposition to their candidate was the primary object of Lincoln's friends.

"The first state approached," says Mr. Swett, "was Indiana. She was equally divided between Bates and McLean. Saturday, Sunday and Monday were spent upon her, when finally she came to us, unitedly, with twenty-six votes and from that time on acted efficiently with us."

Monday the correspondent of *The Boston Herald* wired his paper that "Abe Lincoln is booming up tonight as a compromise candidate and his friends are in high spirits." For the next few days Lincoln knew no sleep.

Standing before an antique chair, the first made in Michigan, which had been hollowed from the bole of a tree and mounted on crude rockers, Gov. Edwin P. Morgan of New York rapped the convention to order, using a gavel fashioned from a beam of Commodore

Perry's "Lawrence." It was the noon of Wednesday, May 16.

Near the center of the delegates, in the midst of the Missouri representatives, stood a "dreadful looking bowie knife, seven feet in length," which the Republicans of Missouri proposed to present to Congressman John F. Potter of Wisconsin, who had accepted a challenge to a duel with these weapons over his words spoken in criticism of the slavery position of the South —an amusing incident which was then a national event.[1]

The crowded convention, odoriferous of fresh sawed lumber, was a scene of color, the bizarre draperies blending with the bright plaid shawls and high-colored bonnets of the women. Wednesday was spent in organizing, and on Thursday the platform was presented.

Seward men, wearing badges, jubilant with the prospect of victory, marched into the hall behind a band that played the popular air of the day, "O! Isn't He A Darling." Things moved slowly, almost perfunctorily, until the platform was taken up for consideration.

Words of an interview often impress me with the coldness of a page of history; but words read on the associated spot where great events have occurred are enthralling. Mind and body respond to the pulsations of the drama; one's whole being is suffused with a new understanding. Soon I had forgotten the noise of the street and was oblivious of the pedestrians who jostled me; I was listening intently again to the story of Editor Rindlaub, and from his phrases and gestures was ab-

[1]Fowler, *History of the Republican Party*, p. 230. Potter's bowie knives are in the museum of the Wisconsin Historical Society at Madison, Wisconsin.

sorbing scenes which had been a panegyric to him through life.

"When the platform of principles was read it was noticed that while it repudiated the theories of the slaveholders, as well as the Douglas squatter-sovereignty doctrine," said Mr. Rindlaub, "it failed specifically to mention the great principles enunciated in the Declaration of Independence as our political creed and as the moral basis of our institutions.

"Whereupon Joshua R. Giddings, whom everyone knew as the champion of the anti-slavery cause, arose and expressed himself as painfully surprised that the platform did not contain a word of recognition of the Declaration and moved that a clause embodying such recognition be inserted. No sooner had he stopped speaking than a tumult of voices broke forth, with noisy clamor for immediate adoption of the platform; and the amendment was rejected by boisterous vote. Mr. Giddings then took his hat and started toward the door, his great white head towering above the crowd.

"Before he could leave the place, George W. Curtis of the New York delegation sprang from his seat, leaped into his chair and asked to be heard. The impatient and noisy crowd undertook to interrupt him, but he stood firm, saying, 'This is a convention of free speech and I have the floor, and I will stand here until tomorrow morning unless you give me an opportunity to say what I am going to say.' The persistent crowd seemed determined to cry him down, but he held his ground firmly and they finally yielded to his courage. He then went on to argue in favor of the amendment suggested by Mr. Giddings and closed by renewing the motion, in parliamentary form. It was carried with an

overwhelming shout of enthusiasm, after which Mr. Giddings moved back to his seat."

Fate a second time favored Lincoln in this convention. After the platform and the amendment had been adopted, the way was clear for balloting on a presidential candidate. Historians are generally agreed that if the vote had been taken that afternoon, Seward would probably have been nominated. But an unknown delegate frustrated the program. He moved an adjournment until Friday morning at ten o'clock and to the surprise of the spectators the motion carried.

That night the arguments and the strategy of the Lincoln supporters changed the course of events. With the aid of Mr. Greeley, an enemy of Mr. Seward, they convinced the delegations from Pennsylvania and New Jersey that Seward could not carry in those states. They welded the diversified opposition into support for one man.

"We worked like nailers," declared Governor Oglesby of Illinois years afterwards, in recounting the story of that night. Agreements were made with several delegations that if Lincoln's vote reached a certain point, support would be given.

Even with the possibility of the vote being close, Lincoln refused to sanction bargains. One supporter sent him a telegram at Springfield advising him that two delegations could be secured by offers of cabinet positions.

"I authorize no bargains and will be bound by none," Lincoln answered.

At last the fateful hour of ten o'clock on Friday had arrived. Into every nook and corner of the hall were squeezed Lincoln men. Some there are who claim that

the ruse of fake tickets was employed to get so many into the hall. At least the prairie folk were not going to be outdone when it came to making noise. Near the platform three rails were crossed, decorated with flags and blazing with lighted candles.

Long nomination speeches are a frill that have been added by recent conventions. Only a brief statement of the candidate's name was made to the Wigwam convention. William M. Evarts presented the name of Mr. Seward, and the New York contingent gave the convention a thrill with their vociferous shouts. At last the vocal wave subsided, but its strength and volume had stirred the ire of Lincoln's friends.

"I desire on behalf of the delegation from Illinois to put in nomination as a candidate for President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois," announced Norman B. Judd.

The roar started but it soon died. The pitch of enthusiasm had not yet been struck. But when Caleb B. Smith of Indiana seconded the nomination and referred to the "railsplitter," the prairie folk went into hysterical shouting so prolonged that one editor characterized it as the greatest tumult since the walls of Jericho fell.

"Abe Lincoln has it by sound; let us ballot," shouted Judge Logan. When the "terrific emotional spree" was over, the tedious work of calling the roll was begun.

"Mr. Seward led on the first ballot," to quote from Mr. Rindlaub. "But it revealed that Seward's chief contender was Abraham Lincoln, the first vote standing 173 for Seward; 102½ for Lincoln; scattering 190½. The second ballot stood Seward 186½; Lincoln 181; scattering 99½. The result was received with tremendous applause by the Lincoln supporters, while

the Seward men looked on silently, many with blanched faces. The handwriting on the wall seemed perfectly plain.

"The third ballot was begun amid breathless suspense. All over the Wigwam, delegates and spectators were keeping their own tallies. Throughout the whole of that ballot the vast assembly was strangely quiet, except when there were changes to Lincoln. Long before the official tellers had footed up their tally sheets the audience knew Lincoln was in the lead. Four hundred and sixty-five votes were cast, of which Lincoln received 231½ and Seward 181. Two hundred and thirty-three votes were necessary to a choice, and Lincoln lacked only a vote and a half. Then came the crucial moment. The silence was painful. Then a delegate from Ohio sprang upon his chair and announced a change of four votes from Chase to the Lincoln column. 'Lincoln,' shouted the teller, waving the tally sheet; and at a signal a cannon placed on the roof of the Wigwam for that purpose boomed the news to the waiting multitude outside."

The unbridled joy of the convention broke the bounds with the cannon shot, and the sound was taken up by twenty thousand standing outside. A hundred guns soon roared the message from the roof of the Tremont House, where the Lincoln headquarters were housed; boats in the harbor loosed their whistles, bells were rung, and for a day the din went on, spreading in widening circles to every hamlet in Illinois.

Abraham Lincoln did not attend the convention.[1] In-

[1] For information on Lincoln's visits to Chicago see address by William E. Barton, February 10, 1922, before the Chicago Historical Society, printed in pamphlet form.

vited by Solomon Sturges to be entertained at his Chicago home during the week, he had replied that he was "too much of a candidate to go and not quite enough of a candidate to stay away." In the end he concluded to remain in Springfield. During his days of waiting he tried to work in his law office, but could not. On the morning of his nomination, he played a few games of handball in an open court near *The Illinois State Journal* office,[2] but with the announcement of the second ballot he gave this up and went to the editorial rooms to await a telegram.

"Lincoln is nominated," came a flash from Chicago about one o'clock. So rapidly did the word pass by lip that within an hour the whole city knew it and was jubilant. Lincoln attempted to get away from the crowd, to be the first to tell his anxious wife, but people beset him at every corner.

"If you will excuse me," he would reply, acknowledging wishes but again starting towards home, "there is a little woman over on Eighth Street who will be glad to hear the news; I'll go over and tell her."

[2] *Illinois State Journal*, then located at 116 North Sixth Street, marked by tablet.

CHAPTER XV

WHERE LINCOLN MADE HIS HOME

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S Springfield home was unnamed. The only residence he ever owned bears no coat of arms nor title of individuality distinctive of many plantation houses and manors once owned by other famous Americans. The unadorned, white, green-blinded, two-story frame building, crowding the corner of an ordinary city lot, is itself characteristic of the simplicity of him who lived there until called to make his residence in the White House at Washington. It is still "Lincoln's home."

I had waited until after lunch to make my visit. I wanted to ramble along the streets of those seven blocks which he had walked three times daily for more than sixteen years on his way to and from his office. I followed down Capitol Avenue, passed the First Presbyterian church, where his vacant pew still awaits, to Eighth Street. On the corner I paused a moment to get my directions.

"I suppose you are looking for the Lincoln home?" queried an old man who was raking his yard. He did not wait for an answer but pointed in the direction of the Jackson Street intersection. "It's over there where all the automobiles are lined up. Those people are waiting to get in. It opens at 2 o'clock."

Through the trees just swelling into bud, glorying in the soft mellow sunlight of a promised springtime, I

LINCOLN'S HOME, SPRINGFIELD

could see the red brick retaining wall around the yard. I recalled that when Lincoln moved there in the spring of 1844 this was the outskirts of the city with the homes of carpenters and laboring-men about and fields of growing corn stretching away to the Illinois prairies. Now it is within the heart of a city of 75,000 people.

"Is this the same house that Lincoln bought?"

The old man was leaning on his rake, apparently anxious to give explanation.

"Haven't you heard the story?" and he almost chuckled. "It was a little, one-story, white house when Lincoln bought it of the Rev. Charles W. Dresser, the Episcopal minister who had married him and Mary Todd, November 4, 1842, over at Ninian W. Edwards' home, where the Centennial Building now stands. But Lincoln's wife wanted a large house. Often she told him that in the South, where she was born, people who were somebody owned large houses. I guess Lincoln was poor. Anyway, it was some years before he could pay all of the $1,200 which he had bargained as a purchase price. He always answered his wife that it wasn't the size of the house but the character of the people who lived in it that distinguished it.

"That explanation didn't satisfy Mary Todd. One day when he went away for a long trip on the circuit, she called the carpenters and added another story—as it is today. Then when Lincoln came home he walked by the house and inquired of a neighbor's boy where Lincoln lived. I guess he thought he was lost, until the place was pointed out. About that time, Mrs. Lincoln espied him and called him in."

Excited by his anecdote, I hurried down the street to join the pilgrims. The original stone steps, so often

pressed by the awkward feet of Lincoln, led to a doorway enclosed within a lattice work, to sustain flowers and shrubs planted in later years. The door was ajar and Virginia Stuart Brown, a relative of Mary Todd, asked me in.

A stairway in the hall leads to the second story of the twelve-room building, and on either side on the first floor are two front rooms. Beside it a hallway leads toward the dining room and kitchen. There is an addition in the back, a "lean-to," which in Lincoln's time was used in summer, but the woodpile where he chopped and sawed, the barn where he milked the cow and curried the horse, have disappeared. Not until the week after he had been nominated for the Presidency in 1860 did he relinquish going to market and doing his own chores. Lincoln had no garden, and the few roses he planted one year withered from neglect.

"It was in this room at the left that the committee of the Chicago convention notified Mr. Lincoln of his nomination to the Presidency," explained the custodian.

With that simple announcement the spectre of that momentous Saturday evening of May 19, 1860, was again present for the moment. The notification committee, with the permanent chairman of the convention, George Ashmun of Massachusetts, hurriedly arranged themselves around the three walls of the modest parlor. The flickering, yellow flames of a score of candles pricked the darkness, and gave the scene a mellowing aspect. Mr. Ashmun spoke, to the evident embarrassment of the tall, ungainly nominee who stood in the archway of his own home. The response was brief.

"Now I will no longer defer the pleasure of taking

each of you by the hand," he concluded and advanced to Mr. Ashmun. Next stood Governor Morgan of New York, an imposing sycamore.

"Governor, you are a tall man; what is your height?"

"Six-foot-three," he replied as Lincoln came close for a comparative measurement.

After that exchange of typical Western pleasantry, the solemnity of the occasion vanished and conversation became general. The disappointment of several members, who had never before seen him, changed to admiration.

"Mrs. Lincoln will be pleased to see you in the other room, gentlemen," the host finally announced. "You must be thirsty after your journey."

A light refreshment was served, but there was no liquor. Meantime, Springfield was gathering in the street. The event was over in two hours but its memories remained. The walls of the old white house had been sentinels, witnessing the prelude to one of the great epochs of history.

Artistically arranged are chairs and furniture used by the Lincolns; the walls are hung with mementoes. To the back of the committee-reception parlor is a larger room that was used for the entertainment of guests on special occasions. A picture of Mrs. Lincoln looks down from the buff-colored wall.

To the right of the entrance is the parlor where Lincoln received election returns. The clock still ticks on the mantlepiece around which it was his habit to read by the light of the candle or to play with the children, three of whom were born in the old house. An archway to the rear reveals the family dining room, with the little table used by the Lincolns when first married.

The bell fingered so often by Mrs. Lincoln to summon a servant is still ready to respond to her delicate touch.

Aside from its historic associations, the Lincoln home would rank as an interesting piece of pioneer architecture. The clapboards are hand-made, of native walnut; the floors are of unmatched hardwood boards; the laths are of hickory and many of the beams are pinioned with wooden pegs. Nearly a score of windows, symmetrically arranged, admit the sunlight and breeze, making of this shrine a haven where one longs to linger in memory with the tender associations of the distinguished past.

I learned from fellow visitors that after Mr. Lincoln left the residence in 1861, it was rented for nearly twenty years to a variety of tenants, until, in 1883 Mr. O. H. Oldroyd, now of Washington, D. C., leased the premises and installed his now famous Lincoln collection. Four years later the property was deeded to the state by Robert T. Lincoln, the only son then living, but in 1893 Mr. Oldroyd removed his collection to Washington. Since that time, an effort has been made by the state to arrange the rooms and furnishings in the style and simplicity of Lincoln's time.

Some who came when I did were already leaving for visits to other Lincoln scenes. I sat down in a chair to get a better mental picture of the rooms; to ponder the incidents connected with home-life here. The custodian was again making the rounds with still others who were asking questions, taking notes, peering into corners, making the limited moments count for most.

"I just knew the story of Lincoln hiding on his wedding day could not be true!" exclaimed an elderly lady, enunciating her words with a severity of exact expres-

sion suggesting she might be a school teacher. She paused to compare a picture of Lincoln, printed in a popular magazine, with a medallion which hung on the wall.

"Have you read the story of Mrs. Lincoln's family?" she asked her companion. I did not catch the answer.

While they were chatting I obtained a glimpse of the article. Later upon reading it I learned what the animated discussion was about.

Ever since Lincoln's death there has been a controversy over what went on in the privacy of this home. Many of the surmises prove to be as cruel as they are fanciful. William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, whom Mrs. Lincoln disliked, gave testimony to her irascible temper, which at times made her husband tarry on the circuit. Other relatives and servants sustain the story in part.

More recent evidence has softened the hard picture. After a half century of silence on the part of Mrs. Lincoln's family, Kate Helm, the daughter of Emilie Todd Helm, Mary Lincoln's half-sister whom Lincoln called "little sister," has written a biography, *Mary, Wife of Lincoln,* based on Emilie's diary. Most decidedly she acquits Mrs. Lincoln of many of the outbursts long attributed to her. Her narrative denies and explains the oft-repeated story of Lincoln's disappearance on the evening in 1841 when the wedding plans had all been arranged, and sheds light on his melancholy behavior during the next few months which culminated with the marriage in the fall of 1842. It discloses a series of acts which have long been misinterpreted, depicts scenes which add new luster to the name of Lincoln, and lifts

the veil revealing Mrs. Lincoln in a singular role of love and devotion to her husband.

My previous reading had convinced me that not in this green-shuttered, white chimneyed home alone is the entire story of Lincoln's social life to be recast. The changes which marked his growing powers and aspirations must first be sought in other places.

Lincoln was poor when he came to Springfield in March, 1837, and accepted the hospitality of Joshua Speed, Springfield merchant, who had offered the young lawyer a bedroom over his store. Another old friend, who had become attached to Lincoln during his legislative service at Vandalia, also lent assistance. William Butler, state treasurer, encouraged Lincoln to stand again for the legislature; took him into his home on his arrival in Springfield; boarded him; loaned him money and saw that he did not want. For nearly six years until he married Mary Todd, Lincoln had a home with the Butlers, at the southwest corner of Third and Madison Streets. The building has been removed and the location is now covered with switches of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. There are those who glorify Lincoln for his courage during these early days of "pinching" poverty. That praise is due. But others should not be forgotten, for had Speed and Butler failed in friendship and generosity, the story might have had a different ending. Theirs was a hospitality which made progress possible when clouds of adversity hung low on the horizon.

Within the fading light of his own home I was thinking of other women Lincoln had loved. There was Ann Rutledge and then Mary Owens. Breaking away from his close associates in New Salem was a long hard

process. Society there was warm and free compared with the aristocracy which dominated Springfield. He maintained a correspondence with Mary Owens, a Kentucky-bred girl of his own age, who was visiting at New Salem. Three times he proposed marriage to her during 1837 in the strangest letters any lover ever sent. They reveal a psychologist's typical "inferiority complex." Three times he was refused. More than a year passed before she returned to Kentucky to marry James Vineyard in 1841. Had Lincoln persisted, had he shown more ardor, he would have won. He was too analytical of future hardships; too self-conscious; had too many realistic premonitions to be a captivating lover.

"Tell your sister she was a great fool not to stay here and marry me," Lincoln later told Mrs. Able, a sister of Mary Owens.

After his assassination, the circumstances of this unusual friendship were narrated. Mary Owens Vineyard then counted it a high honor to have received his proposals, but—

"Mr. Lincoln was deficient in those little links which make up the chain of a woman's happiness."

Meantime the field of acquaintance in Springfield was enlarging. More prominence was coming to him in law and in politics. People were beginning to recognize his abilities. The Whig party chose him as its legislative leader and attempted to elect him Speaker of the House in 1838 and again in 1840. The honor of being a Whig presidential elector was tendered him. Daily he was associating with the men who were doing things. And more and more society offered him her little favors—parties and dances.

It was in 1839, on the occasion of Mary Todd's second trip to Springfield from Kentucky to visit her sister, Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards, a social leader, that she met Mr. Lincoln.

"Miss Todd, I want to dance with you the worst way," Lincoln insisted following an introduction.

"And he certainly did," Miss Todd later told her half-sister, Mrs. Helm. From the inception, the friendship thrived, upset now and then by lover's quarrels, but always growing more cordial.

"To polish a stone like that," Mary dreamily told Mrs. Helm, who recorded it in her diary, "would be the task of a lifetime. But what a joy to see the beauty and brilliance shine out more clearly each day; but the important thing is the diamond itself, clear and flawless under its film."

There were many trials and disappointments ahead. It has been the custom of many biographers to relate the story of Lincoln's failure to appear at his own wedding, which they claim was scheduled for January 1, 1841. Chapters of explanation have been published.

"Nothing was lacking but the groom," declares Mr. Herndon in his account of the episode. "For some strange reason he had been delayed. An hour passed and the guests and the bride were becoming restless, but they were doomed to disappointment."

"I am now the most miserable man living," Lincoln wrote to his law partner, John T. Stuart, January 23, 1841. "If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forebode I shall not."

Now it appears from a version by Mrs. Lincoln's

family, that there was an engagement but that no wedding date had been set. Lincoln had promised to take Miss Todd to a party, but when he failed to appear on time she went with Stephen A. Douglas, a social and political rival. During the evening, when Lincoln appeared, she gave him no attention. A lover's pique led to his breaking the engagement, which is now offered as the explanation of the story that Lincoln jilted Mary.

The estrangement lasted nearly two years. Certain it is that at a meeting of Mary and Lincoln at the home of Simeon Francis, editor of the *Journal,* the smoldering love was rekindled and they were married on Friday, November 4, 1842, at Ninian Edwards' home, a rambling, old colonial house, the site now marked. The wedding was planned in a hurry. No formal invitations were issued. The baking was done in such a rush that "the frosting on the cake was too warm to be cut." Nor was there a honeymoon trip.

"We are not keeping house, but boarding at the Globe Tavern, which is very well kept by a widow lady of the name of Beck," Lincoln wrote to Joshua Speed, his old friend and benefactor, a few days after the wedding. "Our room and boarding only costs us four dollars a week."

There is a picture of the Globe Tavern in a little booklet at the Lincoln home. It was a two-story, frame building at what is now 315 East Adams Street. All that remains is a marker on the side of another building on the spot, reciting the facts of Lincoln's residence there. It was in this "best boarding house in town" that the Lincolns lived for a year, and there Robert T. Lincoln was born. Crowded conditions in the family

hotel made the purchase of a home imperative, and the Dresser property at the corner of Eighth and Jackson was bought. The family occupied it on May 2, 1844. This was the "Lincoln home," until the President-elect left for Washington.

Mrs. Lincoln came from one of the most talented and aristocratic families of the South. She was nine years younger than her husband, having been born at Lexington, Kentucky, December 13, 1818. A brunette in complexion, possessing rosy cheeks, dark brown hair and a soft, round face; of less than medium height; inclined to be plump; always attractive of dress; quick of wit and brilliant in conversation; at ease in the best of society and a favorite at all functions, she possessed those womanly graces which quickly captivated Lincoln. She wrote her own autobiography in 1865 in five simple lines:

"My mother died when I was still young. I was educated by Madame Mantelli, a lady who lived opposite Mr. Clay, and who was an accomplished French scholar. Our conversation at school was carried on entirely in French—in fact we were allowed to speak nothing else. I finished my education at Mrs. Ward's Academy, an institution to which many people from the North sent their daughters. In 1837 I visited Springfield, Illinois, remaining three months. I returned to Kentucky, remaining until 1839, when I again set out for Illinois which state finally became my home."

The few words reveal the husk but not the soul. Lincoln and his wife were of opposite temperament. He was slow to anger; she was fiery. He was droll; she was sharp and at times sarcastic. He was almost lazy; she was gay and lively. He was melancholy and she was

popular in society. She was critical, but he possessed the saving virtue of keeping still when domestic storms threatened.

Mrs. Lincoln could not get along with servants. In one instance Lincoln paid the "hired girl" extra compensation unknown to his wife, to bind the servant to overlook harassments by the mistress of the house.

"Stay by her, Marie! Stay by her!" he would exclaim when the girl made complaint.

Browsing from wall to wall, examining pictures, attempting to associate incidents with articles, furniture and scenes, I found myself again at the doorway. Suddenly the story told by Mrs. Harriet Chapman, the daughter of Dennis Hanks, describing Lincoln stretched at length on the floor reading, was visualized. I looked down. The boards were of hardwood, unevenly matched—one narrow, one wide and another short. It was the same old floor, the style of carpentry of Lincoln's day.

"That floor is a pretty hard place on which to read," I fancied, contemplating the easy chairs and upholstered divans of the present time. Lincoln lived in a hard age.

Harriet Chapman told other incidents. A relative of Lincoln, she was induced to make her home with the Lincoln family early in the forties while obtaining an education. Returning from a trip on the circuit Lincoln stopped at Charleston and brought her back, lurching along for two days over rough roads in his rickety buggy drawn by the bay mare, "Belle." A year later she returned home.

"Anything I can tell you about Mr. Lincoln will be cheerfully given," she wrote Mr. Herndon when he

was gathering facts for his life of Lincoln, "but I would rather omit further mention of his wife, as I could say but little in her favor."

"You ask me," she said to an inquirer after Mr. Lincoln's death, "how Mr. Lincoln acted at home. I can say, and that truly, he was all that a husband, father, and neighbor should be—kind and affectionate to his wife and child ('Bob' being the only one they had when I was with them), and very pleasant to all around him. Never did I hear him utter an unkind word. For instance: one day he undertook to correct his child, and his wife was determined that he should not, and attempted to take it from him; but in this she failed. She then tried 'tongue lashing,' but met with the same fate; for Mr. Lincoln corrected his child as a father ought to do, in the face of his wife's anger, and that, too, without even changing his countenance or making any reply to his wife.

"His favorite way of reading, when at home, was lying down on the floor. I fancy I see him now, lying full length in the hall of his old house reading. When not engaged reading law books, he would read literary works, and was very fond of reading poetry, and often, when he would be, or appear to be, in deep study, would commence and repeat aloud some piece that he had taken a fancy to. He often told laughable jokes and stories when he thought we were looking gloomy."

Lincoln was fond of Shakespeare, and John Hay, one of his secretaries, relates the story of his partiality for *Richard II.* Upon later investigation I found that the picture drawn in one of the darkest passages particularly satiated his imagination.

"The terrible outburst of grief and despair into

which Richard falls in the third act had a peculiar fascination for him," declared Mr. Hay. "Could these walls but speak they would echo the measured tones which so often repeated with dramatic emphasis these prophetic lines:

'For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground,
And tell sad stories of the death of kings;—
How some have been deposed; some slain in war;
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;
Some poison'd by their wives, some sleeping kill'd;
All murdered: for within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court; and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks,
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh, which walls about our life,
Were brass impregnable, and humor'd thus
Comes at the last and with a little pin
Bores through the castle, and—farewell, king!' "

Communion with thoughts so melancholy quite naturally reflected his own somber spirit. Lincoln in his abstraction did many things which irritated the sensitive nature of his wife. She had been bred in a home where things were different; where the table talk was social and scintillating. There were times at the Lincoln board when the owner was so engrossed that he knew not what he ate. Sometimes he came to it in his shirt sleeves; sometimes he reached. These things annoyed, and she scolded.

It was a difficult task, this correcting of some of his

ingrained frontier habits. If visitors came, he oft-times never remembered to wait for the maid but would go to the door himself. About the house he was thoroughly informal. Once when a Chicago lady came to call on Mrs. Lincoln by appointment, he received her, apologized for Mrs. Lincoln's delay and explained that she would be down "as soon as she got all her trotting harness on."

Moreover, the young wife found her family trials increasing with the coming of each baby. The birth of four sons into the Lincoln family in ten years so restricted the nervous, anxious mother that she could not demand a leading role in society. Robert T. Lincoln, born in August, 1843, while they were still living at the Globe Tavern, was the only son to live to maturity. For years he was a lawyer in Chicago, was Secretary of War in the cabinets of President Garfield and President Arthur, and minister to Great Britain under President Harrison. He died at his summer home in Manchester, Vermont, July 26, 1926. The other three preceded Mrs. Lincoln in death. Edward Baker Lincoln died in Springfield, February 1, 1850; William Wallace Lincoln in the White House, February 20, 1862, and Thomas (Tad) Lincoln at Chicago, July 15, 1871.

Lincoln loved children. That is one characteristic upon which all Springfield agrees. On Sunday mornings he would draw them around the nearby streets in their awkward carts; in the evenings he would read to them and tell them stories, and many of their boyish pranks went unnoticed by their father.

Stories about them have been handed down by the neighboring families. One that amused me, and which I retold to a group of the visitors during the afternoon

MARY TODD LINCOLN

just as it had been related to me earlier in the day, had to do with a handful of walnuts. A friend passing in front of the house heard Lincoln's two boys, who were with him, crying. He stopped to ask the father what was the matter.

"Just what's the matter with the whole world," Lincoln responded. "I've got three walnuts and each wants two."

Jesse W. Weik, in his book, *The Real Lincoln,* gathered from sources while Lincoln's friends were still living, recounts an incident told him by Judge Samuel H. Treat, at one time a member of the Illinois Supreme Court and later a United States District Judge.

"Judge Treat told, among other things, that one morning Lincoln came to his office and joined him in a game of chess. The two were enthusiastic chess players and when the opportunity offered indulged in the game. On the occasion named they were soon deeply absorbed, nor did they realize how near it was to the noon hour until one of Lincoln's boys came running in with a message from his mother announcing dinner at the Lincoln home, a few steps away. Lincoln promised to come at once and the boy left; but the game was not entirely out; yet so near the end the players, confident that they would finish in a few moments, lingered a while. Meanwhile almost half an hour had passed. Presently the boy returned with a second and more urgent call for dinner, but so deeply engrossed in the game were the players that they apparently failed to notice his arrival. This was more than the little fellow could stand; so that, angered at their inattention, he moved nearer, lifted his foot, and deliberately kicked the board, chessmen and all into the air.

" 'It was one of the most abrupt, if not brazen things I ever saw,' said Treat, 'but the surprising thing was its effect on Lincoln. Instead of the animated scene between an irate father and an impudent youth, which I expected, Mr. Lincoln without a word of reproof calmly arose, took the boy by the hand, and started for dinner. Reaching the door he turned, smiled good-naturedly, and exclaimed, 'Well, Judge, I reckon we'll have to finish this game some other time,' and passed out. 'Of course I refrained from any comment,' continued Treat, who, by the way, was old and had never been blessed with a child, 'but I can assure you of one thing: if that little rascal had been a boy of mine he never would have applied his boots to another chess-board!' "

From the steps of the home, where the children of Lincoln played or watched at twilight for the return of their father, were to be witnessed more memorable scenes.

Fancy, as did I, looking out through the narrow panes, that the line of automobiles were horse-drawn carriages decorated with party banners; that the pedestrians in the streets were multiplied into long lines of oilcloth-caped marchers in parades, and that the kaleidoscope of history recording the fall campaign of 1860 is passing again for review.

It is mid-day on the eighth of August and the candidacy of Lincoln is being celebrated by two monstrous processions. Bands are playing in noisy competition; banners are flying; floats are passing and the folk from the prairies are there with hearty welcome. They have come on horseback and in wagons, making a parade

eight miles long to go by his house. Lincoln, watching from his doorway, is well pleased and Mary is happy.

Three months pass. November has sealed the election. It is the night of a thousand candles glistening from every home. The evening is glorious. The doors of the Lincoln home have been opened for a public reception. Townspeople and legislators jostle for space.

"We found the house crowded, but we did not know any of the persons, as all our friends had been there earlier," writes a little girl in her diary. "Mr. Lincoln looked handsome to me. His whiskers are a great improvement, and he has such a pleasant smile I could not help but admire him."

People in the street want to see him. They call, "Speech! Speech!" Stepping out before his residence in answer he responds:

"Friends and Fellow Citizens: Please excuse me on this occasion from making a speech. In all our rejoicing let us neither express nor cherish any hard feeling toward any citizen who by his vote differed from us. Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are brothers and should dwell together in the bonds of fraternal feeling."

As I loitered around the rooms which Mary, wife of Lincoln, so often swept and dusted, saw the furniture she kept spick and span, and thought of her own nervous nature, her hilarious youngsters and the eccentric habits of her genius husband, I wondered if the world had not been too critical of her. A clash of two natures so opposite might well stir anger, but it did not sully a love that was eternal.

Perhaps it was the ambition of Mrs. Lincoln which kept him climbing. She was anxious that he succeed;

she entertained when the social event might help him; she prodded him to activity and she drank with evident relish the news of the event which placed the burden of the Presidency upon him.

Long before then she had known that the diamond she had polished was "clear and flawless."

I lingered still in the old home on Eighth Street. Outside, the world was quiet and serene. Most of the afternoon visitors had departed. The old man on the corner had finished his raking and was burning the rubbish in the street.

Again I was in the world of commonplace activities. When the gardener saw me coming he made his way slowly to the sidewalk. We talked about Lincoln. His father had long known him.

"Most visitors stay a long time," he remarked, as we saw the last automobile party of the late afternoon departing.

"The house is so much like Lincoln—just plain, and simple and strong."

Time drops the curtain. The final reception is held in the old home, February 6, 1861—a levee that brings thousands. The Lincoln family spends its last evenings around the family table. Its members move to the Chenery House for a few days,—then to Washington. For them the green shutters will no longer hum and rattle when the prairie winds are high.

CHAPTER XVI

TWILIGHT IN THE OLD SANGAMON COURT HOUSE

THE Sangamon county court house in Springfield, Illinois, is a rare old gem set in the clasp of places renowned as haunts of Abraham Lincoln. During his lifetime it was the state capitol, located there largely through his own initiative as a legislator, while serving as a representative from New Salem, down at Old Vandalia. No other temple to his political achievements could be more fittingly preserved. It is as romantic in memories as the story of a great cathedral, where each nave and room is impressed with some ennobling triumph of the architect's conception.

In the twilight the somber brown lines of the shadow-touched, sandstone building seem to invite reminiscence. Within its halls mighty epochs in the drama of a nation still radiate in fantastic glory the courage of Abraham Lincoln.

It was in these dimly lighted rooms that he served as a legislative representative during the winter of 1840-1841; here in the library he studied his law cases; here in its legislative chambers in 1855 he saw his hopes for a seat in the United States Senate blasted by a deadlock; here as the leader of a political revolt in 1858 he denounced the growing menace of the slave power, saying that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," and prophesied that this nation could "not endure half slave and half free." Here in the narrow

quarters of the executive office, placed at his disposal, he met the nation's leaders who came for conferences with the President-elect, and here at the foot of the Speaker's stand in Representatives Hall, now a court room, rested the catafalque of the martyr, while a bereaved multitude crowded through the night past his bier.

Sangamon[1] is a sonorous word met everywhere in the early life of Mr. Lincoln. It takes its name from the muddy little river which rises in the central part of the state and traverses a territory rich in its associations with his activities. On its banks, ten miles west of Decatur, he helped his father in the spring of 1830 build their new home in Illinois; his first political announcement favored the development of the river as a navigable stream; he turned again to the Sangamon at Springfield as a site for the proposed new capitol, and when he settled down to make his permanent home it was in Sangamon county, not far from the old river. Little wonder that those who know him best gave to him the sobriquet of the "tall leader of the Sangamon."

After the seat of government was moved from Vandalia in 1837, and while the capitol was being constructed from fossil limestone taken from quarries on the outskirts of the town, sessions of the legislature were temporarily held in the old Second Presbyterian Church.[2] It was not until his last term as a lawmaker, during three months in the winter of 1840-1841, that the representatives were able to convene in the new structure.

[1] In Potawatomie Indian language means "plenty."

[2] This edifice stood on the west side of Fourth Street, between Monroe and Adams Streets, now a business section.

Designed along the lines of Greek architecture, with four large grooved pillars supporting the pediment over the entrances, high, wide windows, and the whole surmounted by a symmetrical dome, the building was an acknowledged model among capitols of its period. It rests in the center of a little, tree-sprinkled park around which the business enterprises of Springfield rise to a height that shuts out a view a short distance from the square. Walking around the city streets one comes upon the place with surprise.

"It was a fine building in its day and Mr. Lincoln must have felt proud as he rambled around its square rooms with their high ceilings and thought to himself that it was largely through his own maneuvering for votes that it had been erected on this spot," commented the old elevator-man who has had long years of service in the age-toned building.

No official guide could possess more information and none could be more anxious to make a visit memorable. From the thousands who have come seeking to share the atmosphere and environments in which Mr. Lincoln lived, he has gathered a wealth of information and anecdotes about the place which he retells in a spirited manner as if you were the first to listen to his recital.

"Two years after Mr. Lincoln's death the state had so increased in population and expanded in business that the building was no longer adequate as a state-house. It was sold to Sangamon county for a court house, and a new capitol was erected several blocks away," the elevator-operator related. "In 1899 it had become too small for county purposes and the entire building was put on stilts to make room for a new ground floor addition. The change marred much of

the artistic beauty, but it gave the needed room without changing that part of the old capitol as Mr. Lincoln knew it. His old haunts have been preserved."

The operator crossed the hallway and unlocked doors, pointing out the rooms in the northeast corner of the third floor where the Supreme Court had held its sessions and where many of the cases appealed during Lincoln's career as a lawyer were argued.

Adjoining the chambers was then a library where the attorneys gathered to study and brief their cases and where after the day's work was done it was the custom to meet Mr. Lincoln and listen to his stories. At times the jug of whiskey was passed, but Lincoln did not partake. One day someone attempted to ridicule him for his abstemiousness.

"What! Are you a temperance man?" he inquired sneeringly.

"No," retorted Lincoln with a smile that robbed his words of venom. "I'm not a temperance man, but I'm temperate in this, to wit,—I don't drink."

These meetings in the library, during the sessions of the court, were not only an event in the life of Mr. Lincoln, but to the visiting lawyers. They were like a reunion of friends from the Eighth Circuit, and seldom did the sessions adjourn before midnight.

"Now I will take you down to the old Representatives Hall, where Mr. Lincoln made some of the greatest speeches of his career," and the guide led the way to a large chamber, used as a court room, overlooking the scene of the law offices of Lincoln and Herndon.

The interior reminded me of the arrangements in the little opera houses of forty years ago. A semi-circular balcony, supported by fluted wooden pillars, overhangs

a part of the main floor in the rear. Ante-chambers at the sides shut off the windows, requiring the use of artificial light most of the day in the main room. Opera seats for court spectators occupy the space where once stood legislators' desks; the speaker's rostrum has been tranformed into the court's bench.

Between the judge's chair and the witness box a polished bronze tablet has been attached to the wall:

1840-1876
ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.
THIS HOUSE IS MEMORABLE AS THE SCENE
OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
HERE HE DELIVERED THE IMMORTAL
"HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF"
SPEECH, JUNE 16, 1858.
HERE HIS REMAINS LAY IN STATE WHEN
BROUGHT TO SPRINGFIELD FOR BURIAL
MAY 4, 1865.

The simple recital on that tablet covers a whole epoch of history. Upon his retirement from a single term in Congress, in March, 1849, Mr. Lincoln sought from President Zachary Taylor an appointment as commissioner of the General Land Office in Illinois. He thought he would like steady employment at a fixed salary. After the office was given to Justin Butterfield, a member of the Chicago Bar, the governorship of Oregon was tendered by President Millard Fillmore, but by that time Lincoln had returned to the practice of law and declined the post, partly because of the opposition of Mrs. Lincoln. Meantime, he had saved enough money out of his congressional salary to pay the debts that had hung over him since New Salem days and was ready to begin life anew.

During the next five years Mr. Lincoln made his reputation at the bar, gradually giving less of his time

to politics. In this interval the slavery issue was crowding more and more into the political spotlight but at first it crept along so noiselessly that Mr. Lincoln took little notice.

Then came the alarm. The signing of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, May 30, 1854, sponsored by Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, accomplishing the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, which had limited slavery to the South, aroused Abraham Lincoln from his law books and recalled him to public life.[1] Slavery might now become a menace to every state. That date became a critical point in his career. And the old Sangamon court house became the arena where the torch of liberty was lifted high.

Looking from his car window on his return journey to Illinois late in the summer of 1854, Senator Douglas found the way lighted by bonfires of protest and the burning of effigies of himself. At once he set forth to stem the tide. When he attempted to speak in Chicago, September 1, the crowd hooted him for hours, but he persisted and made a courageous speech. A month later, on the occasion of the state fair in Springfield, October 3, he delivered in the House of Representatives a three-hour address in defense of his position. Popular sovereignty, he argued, was the right of the people to rule. Lincoln listened in the back of the room and when Douglas had finished, the announcement was made that Lincoln would reply the following afternoon in the same place. The clash of opposing ideas had come.

"Senator Douglas sat here, where the witness box is now located," explained Mr. H. J. Brown, the bailiff

[1] See Chapter IX, At the Cross Roads in Peoria.

of the court, which now convenes in the chamber of the old House of Representatives. The whole scene has been re-enacted and told so many times in the last quarter of a century by those who heard the address that their reminiscences have become a part of the heritage of the old building and its employees.

"It was a warm afternoon and Mr. Lincoln removed his coat while speaking," the bailiff continued. "At times he was interrupted by Senator Douglas, but that did not seem to bother him much."

There is no complete record of the speech, but historians agree that it was practically the same address as was delivered by him two weeks later (October 16), at Peoria.[1]

At the outset Lincoln apologetically asserted that if he made any mis-statements of facts he wished to be corrected. He desired to be both accurate and just. Senator Douglas in his suave manner stood up, bowed and replied that he would withhold any interruptions until the close. But as Mr. Lincoln warmed to his subject, as the veins in his neck stood out when he became impassioned, "and the whole house was as still as death," Senator Douglas could restrain himself no longer.

"No, sir! I will tell you what was the origin of the Nebraska bill," he broke in, "it was this, Sir! God created man and placed before him both good and evil, and left him free to choose for himself. That was the origin of the Nebraska bill."

"Well, then," responded Lincoln, speaking each word slowly so that the audience would get it all, "I

[1] See Chapter IX, At the Cross Roads in Peoria.

think it was a great honor to Judge Douglas that he was the first man to discover that fact."

The retort carried its own rebuke.

So much attention was attracted to Mr. Lincoln by this address that he decided at once to become a candidate before the legislature for a seat about to become vacant in the United States Senate. Popular election of senators was unheard of in those days. The term of General James Shields, Democrat, the man with whom once he had almost fought a duel, was about to expire and with Lyman Trumbull, an "anti-Nebraska" Democrat, already in the field, against him, it was believed by the Whigs that the rift in the Democratic ranks would insure Lincoln's election.

How little Mr. Lincoln had been thinking about his political fortunes up to that moment was disclosed by the fact that his friends in the interval had elected him to the legislature. He had to resign, and entered at once upon the strategy of the senatorial campaign. Strangely enough, Senator Douglas did not care to continue his speeches in the state, and after the Peoria tilt secured an agreement with Mr. Lincoln that neither should do further campaigning that fall. Lincoln's friends carried on a canvass of the legislature.

Into the House of Representatives on February 8, 1855, crowded both branches of the legislature in joint session for the purpose of balloting on a senator. Mrs. Lincoln sat in the gallery to watch proceedings, but she was so confident of success that a reception had been arranged at the Edwards home for the evening.

A deadlock in voting developed. Finally the Democrats, in the hope of defeating Mr. Lincoln, transferred their votes from Senator Shields to Governor Joel A.

Matteson. As between Matteson and Trumbull, Lincoln strongly favored Trumbull, because of his "anti-Nebraska" sentiments. On the fifteenth ballot the entire Lincoln strength was switched and Trumbull was chosen, much to the surprise and chagrin of the old line Democrats.

That night the planned entertainment for Mr. Lincoln's friends was given over to a reception in honor of Senator-elect Trumbull and his wife. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln appeared in the receiving line.

"I regard my defeat moderately, but I am not nervous about it," Mr. Lincoln wrote to Congressman Elihu B. Washburne, the day following. "I could have headed off every combination, and been elected had it not been for Matteson's double game—and his defeat gives me more pleasure than my own gives me pain. On the whole it is perhaps well for our general cause that Trumbull is elected."

Thereafter for months Mr. Lincoln clung to the hope that the Whig party would suffer a re-birth. That day never came. With others he gradually drifted into the gathering revolt against slavery, which culminated with the delivery of his famous "lost" speech at Bloomington, May 29, 1856. Almost in a bound he had come to be the recognized leader of the newly organized Republican party.

From that day he lost no opportunity to organize for the coming elections. Two years later old Representatives Hall was to hear one of the greatest speeches of his career. No longer was he feeling his way on the issue of slavery. He had come to terms with his conscience. He was a Republican.

Realizing that the state convention of the party

which convened at Springfield on June 16 would nominate him for Senator, Mr. Lincoln spent considerable time on his address, modeling the opening statement after Webster's reply to Hayne. This he committed to memory. The convention convened in the morning and nominated Abraham Lincoln as "the first and only choice of the Republicans of Illinois for United States Senator as the successor of Stephen A. Douglas." Then the meeting adjourned until evening, waiting to hear from Mr. Lincoln.

Apprehensive that he might be too bold in his statements, Mr. Lincoln called a small conference of his closest friends at the law library and read his address to them. Many thought it was too radical; others were jubilant over the stand he had taken on slavery.

"Deliver that speech as read and it will make you President," urged Mr. Herndon. All others disagreed, but for once he followed Herndon's advice.

The opening paragraph of that speech electrified his friends and drew the fire of his enemies.

"Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall;

OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE, SANGAMON COURT HOUSE

but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all of the states, old as well as new. North as well as South."

That speech was the opening of a campaign that led to the famous debates with Senator Douglas; it resulted in promulgating the Freeport doctrine that cost Mr. Douglas the support of the South for the Presidency; it helped to split the Democratic party; it placed Lincoln on the highway to become a national figure and carried him on a wave that landed him in the presidential chair.

All of the events had been recalled in our meeting at the steps where that speech had been delivered. I was about to leave the old hall when the bailiff called me back.

"Do you want to see the President's room? Most people do," he remarked. I did not know what was meant, but I followed.

Across the hall from the House of Representatives is a small room now occupied as a private office of one of the judges. It is less than fifteen feet square. Three windows admit a flood of light, making it one of the most cheerful in the entire building. It is the executive office of the old capitol. Into that chamber came the leaders of the nation for conferences after Lincoln's election, while he was shaping the plans for the naming of a cabinet and outlining policies for his administration. The significance of the room dawns on the

visitor as he reads the words carved in bronze on the wall:

THIS ROOM WHICH WAS A PART
OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
WAS USED AS A PUBLIC RECEPTION ROOM BY
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
AFTER HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES
NOVEMBER, 1860, UNTIL HIS DEPARTURE
FOR WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 11, 1861.

To that office Mr. Lincoln summoned some of the great men of the nation. Here upon invitation came a galaxy of notables including Horace Greeley, Edward Bates, Carl Schurz, E. D. Baker, David Wilmot, A. K. McClure, Thurlow Weed, George W. Julian, Salmon P. Chase, and many others. Some of the states sent delegations to give assurance of loyalty. Office-seekers trooped there in numbers. A new party had come into power; a new deal was being made.

Each morning for an hour while he opened his mail the artists with their temporary studios across the hall painted his likeness; four hours each day were given to visitors.

To this room in December, 1860, came Thurlow Weed, the Albany editor, acting as an emissary for William H. Seward. Their conversation foreshadowed a great epoch in American history. Affairs in the South had rapidly grown worse. The palsied Buchanan administration had practically abdicated. Congress was attempting to bargain with the South. Crittenden had offered his plan to restore the old Missouri Compromise and place it under the protection of a constitutional amendment, with a guaranty that Congress would not interfere with slavery in the states where it existed. Lincoln listened to Weed intently. He knew

that in the belief of Seward and Greeley this would placate the South. Before his mind arose a vision of a "house divided"—a nation of two zones. Slavery boldly challenged the right of the federal government to interfere with this form of privilege which denied equality and sought to enrich one economic group and one section without regard to the equal rights of other sections. It flaunted the inherent American love of human freedom. Lincoln met the situation unflinchingly, heroically. He refused to accept the proposal. Nathaniel W. Stephenson, an able biographer,[1] finds in that single act "the crisis" in the life of Abraham Lincoln. He could not abandon the real doctrines of the party which had elected him; he could not consent to the division of the Union into dominions. He was a Nationalist. Out of that decision came the Civil War. When the South learned his attitude, its leaders began to make plans for a confederacy.

Came others—old men and women—all friends of many years—who wanted no offices, sought no recognition—only wanted to bring him their blessings. William Jones, the storekeeper of Gentryville, Indiana, who thirty years before had hired Mr. Lincoln as a common laborer at a dollar a day, arrived bringing a flood of reminiscences of Lincoln's boyhood; Hannah Armstrong, whose son Mr. Lincoln had cleared of a murder charge, spent a few days at the Lincoln home; and on one other day an old gentleman from Mississippi sauntered in to see if the President-elect was as bad as pictured.

"If the people of the South could but hear what I have listened to they would love instead of hate Mr.

[1] Stephenson, Nathaniel W., *Lincoln*, pp. 109-115.

Lincoln," he said amid tears as he left the office. "But they will not believe me."

A few days before Mr. Lincoln left for Washington, and while in conference at the office with politicians, an old lady bent with toil, wearing the clothing of a farmer's wife, including a flaring bonnet, unfalteringly asked to see the President. She brought the tribute of a mother.

"I wanted to give you something to take to Washington," she said, "and these are all I had. I spun the yarn and knit them socks myself."

He took them tenderly, talked with her a moment, thanked her and went as far as the door. The love of the plain people was his.

Today the noiseless wings of age hover over the old court house in its slumbering silence. If its walls could only speak, new epochs in history would be written.

CHAPTER XVII

WHERE LINCOLN WROTE HIS FAMOUS INAUGURAL

TWO potted ferns, dark green and luxuriant, are vigils on a window sill above the desk where Abraham Lincoln sat in the silence of a three-story office building in Springfield, Illinois, to write his first inaugural address.

In Lincoln's time it was a dingy and almost inaccessible room illuminated from a skylight. There was no public entrance. Today it is an artist's studio. Its walls now speak in tones of the ages with copies of the old masters and scenery limned from the vicinity of Lincoln's manhood smiling down upon the scene.

I had spent the early morning hours around the old law office of Logan and Lincoln, and from the lips of the architect who has long occupied the suite had heard of the difficulties encountered by Mr. Lincoln after his election in getting away from the callers and office-seekers long enough to write his inaugural message. Always before, he had worked in the quiet of the law library at the capitol or at his law office, but these haunts were now known to all Springfield. There was not a chance of a moment's seclusion for reflection in either.

"Mr. Lincoln's brother-in-law, C. M. Smith, owned a three-story building at 528 East Adams Street, just around the corner from these old Logan and Lincoln offices," explained Mr. Murray S. Hanes, the architect,

whose father, it may be said parenthetically, had drawn the plans for expanding the old Sangamon court house on the Square.

"There was no entrance to the third floor offices except through the private office in the rear of the grocery. So Mr. Smith fitted up a room for Mr. Lincoln's private use. It was there that the first inaugural address was written."

Except for installing a stairway which leads to East Adams Street, few changes have been made in the building. One enters the steep stairs beside a corroded bronze tablet which reads:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
PREPARED AND WROTE
HIS FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS
AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
IN THE THIRD STORY OF THIS BUILDING
JANUARY, 1861.

A long, shabby hallway leads to the rear of the building and joins with the stairs which Lincoln used to enter into the seclusion of the third floor. Lincoln's feet had ascended these well-worn stairs; his hands had grasped this same rail as he had climbed the two crooked flights to the rooms where his career in statesmanship was being shaped so providentially for national ends. I, too, with a solemn, albeit an ecstatic look into the past, began to climb these stairs, my hand reminiscently grasping the same railing, my thoughts turning resistlessly towards the events in Lincoln's early political life in these very haunts.

After ringing the bell at the studio I observed that the light for the stairway and the adjoining room was obtained from a glass-enclosed skylight, and that, on the window ledge between, two large fern-brakes hid

the sills with their foliage. At once I felt something of the companionship of the place. One of its charms is that it must be sought out in its hidden recesses.

Ordinarily one does not find the neighbors or inhabitants of historic spots in exuberant sympathy with the reverence, or imbued with the considerations of sanctity, which a visitor entertains. Miss E. Ackermann, the artist, is an exception. She loves her studio because of its hallowed associations and needs no explanation of your homage. She herself has lived in New Salem, where Mr. Lincoln spent his young manhood, and many of her finest art creations are scenes from its upland vantage points.

"Mr. Lincoln had his desk under the skylight below the windows," she explained.

Ushered so quickly into such a presence one feels a sense of the sublime; a stillness humbles one as if listening to mighty words. The little, high-ceilinged room was once the crucible where a great soul molded the destiny of the nation.

"Do many people come to see the place?" I asked.

"Not so many recently," she said. "It is a difficult place to find. When Henry B. Rankin, who was once a law student in Mr. Lincoln's office, was living, he was sending people here right along."

The mention of Mr. Rankin's name stirred my rising enthusiasm. He was the man who acted as a confidential messenger to carry the books and papers from Mr. Herndon to Mr. Lincoln, while the first inaugural address was being prepared. After one of these errands, Herndon asked if Mr. Lincoln had sent back any word.

"I do not believe he saw me place the package on

the table before him or realized that I was in the room," Mr. Rankin responded.

"That's what I expected," Herndon replied. "He wishes nothing so much as to be left alone."

Early in January, Mr. Lincoln had held a conference with his law partner over the message.

"He told me what works he intended to consult," says Mr. Herndon in his biography. "I looked for a long list, but when he went over it I was greatly surprised. He asked me to furnish him with Henry Clay's great speech delivered in 1850; with Andrew Jackson's proclamation against Nullification; and with a copy of the Constitution. He afterwards called for Webster's reply to Hayne, a speech which he read when he lived at New Salem, and which he always regarded as the grandest specimen of American oratory. With these few 'volumes,' and no further sources of reference, he locked himself up in a room upstairs over a store across the street from the State House, and there, cut off from all communication and intrusion, he prepared the address. Though composed amid the unromantic surroundings of a dingy, dusty, and neglected back room, the speech has become a memorable document. Posterity will assign to it a high rank among historical utterances; and it will ever bear comparison with the efforts of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, or any that preceded its delivery from the steps of the national capitol."

Though the dark office has been transformed by an artist's touch, the spirit of Lincoln pervades it. The noise of the street below never penetrates these venerable precincts; a quiet stillness reigns in his sought-for seclusion.

Amid the tempered light, the open window by the

table, the reposeful spirit of ages in art, one cannot help picturing him there at his task.

While the South planned secession, while men in Congress talked compromise over principles, while the cotton belt prepared to set up a slave republic, he wrote in solemn and majestic "homespun" language the keynote of his message. He pronounced each word audibly as he set it down.

"I hold that in contemplation of universal law and of the constitution, the union of these states is perpetual. . . .

"Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you. . . .

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the almighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth

and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people. . . .

"My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend it.'"

Such an appeal to reason! It was the inexorable logic of the lawyer enunciating the fundamental ideals upon which this nation must stand. It reveals the breadth and vision of his genuine statesmanship. For majesty

of language, it takes its place in the literature of the sublime.

"Unfortunately, one of the most beautiful paragraphs of the address was not written here," remarked my companion, who had been reading the story of the writing of the message.[1] "When Mr. Lincoln reached Washington he submitted the draft to Mr. Seward, who had been chosen as his secretary of state. Mr. Lincoln had closed the original with the question: 'Shall it be peace or the sword?' Mr. Seward suggested that there should be instead some words of affection. He wrote a paragraph embodying the idea, but it was verbose and not beautiful. Lincoln was a great master of language and rewrote it in its final classical form:

" 'I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature'."

My companion and I stood for a few moments in silence, in the quietest place in Springfield. I thanked the artist for her courtesies. As we parted she crossed the room, and looking back we saw her giving attention to her ferns—memorials at this shrine where the First Inaugural was born. The busy street and bright sunlight in the out-of-doors now broke the spell of a fascinating environment.

[1] See Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. III. pp. 317-344.

CHAPTER XVIII

LINCOLN VISITS OLD HOME FOLK

TWELVE miles south of Mattoon, Illinois, in the old Gordon Cemetery near Shiloh Church, are the graves of a meek man and woman—a father and stepmother. Over them rises an unpolished granite block, which bears the single eulogy:

THEIR HUMBLE BUT WORTHY HOME GAVE
ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO THE WORLD.

From a pilgrimage there I believe one may learn more of the innate kindness of their son than could be gained by hours of reading. To this spot came Abraham Lincoln on his last trip into the country before he journeyed to Washington to take the oath as President of the United States. His father had been dead ten years, but Sarah Bush Lincoln at seventy-three welcomed her stepchild to her two-room, log cabin with a love known only to mothers. When he went away he was never to return.

The tour of this secluded country teems with an absorbing interest to one familiar with Lincoln's life. His thoughts were here more often than his feet trod the fields. Here are glimpsed vistas little known to historians. The zealous protection Lincoln gave to his stepmother naturally enhances one's admiration of him, illuminating the weed-fringed roadside, which passes her now obliterated home. Rise as he did in power and

influence to a pinnacle the home folk could not comprehend, he nevertheless did not forget them. Even in the hour of his greatest success his thoughts turned to the foster-mother with white hair in the log cabin near Farmington. It was the little things he did that help to make his memory imperishable.

This last visit was the culmination of a number of efforts which Abraham Lincoln had made to improve the circumstances of his family. They were a restless people, hoping that with each turn of events would come ease and prosperity. Within a year after their first Illinois settlement near Decatur in 1830, they had moved sixty miles away into Coles county, to a farm near the present village of Lerna, south of Mattoon and Charleston. It was to this homestead that Lincoln returned following his flatboat trip to New Orleans in 1831 before going to New Salem to become a store clerk. In a few years another move was made within the community and finally to the acres near Farmington, a cross-roads hamlet, where his father lived until his death.[1]

Many were the times when the attentions of Mr. Lincoln were turned to a remembrance of home folk. On one occasion William G. Greene, his New Salem chum, was going to Kentucky for a visit, and Lincoln induced him to carry a letter to his parents, suggesting that it would be a good place to spend the night.

"You're welcome, heartily welcome," said Thomas Lincoln, when told the visitor came bearing a message from his son.[2] "I s'pose Abe's still a-foolin' hisself with

[1] Thomas Lincoln, born 1776, died January 17, 1851; Sarah Bush Lincoln, born in Hardin county, Ky., Dec. 13, 1778, died on the old homestead near Farmington, Ill., Dec. 10, 1869.

[2] Whitney, Henry C., *Lincoln*, Vol. 1, p. 74.

eddication. I tried to stop it, but he's got that fool idee in his head an' it can't be got out. Now I hain't got no eddication, but I get along better than ef I had."

The family gave him many worries. When John D. Johnston, his stepbrother, who lived with the old folk, attempted to borrow $80, Lincoln advised him to go to work and that for every dollar he earned, Lincoln would give him another dollar. He attempted to stir him to ambition.

"Let father and the boys take charge of things at home," he wrote Johnston. "Prepare for a crop and make a crop; and you go to work for the best money wages—or in discharge of any debt—that you can get; and to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you that for every dollar you will between this and the first of next May, get for your labor, either as money or discharging your own indebtedness, I will give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you should go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines of California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles county." [1]

No such appeals to ambition were made to his father. Age seems to have made him more contented. Thomas Lincoln worked as a farmer and carpenter to the end. Recollections among the people on Goose Neck Prairie, where he lived the last twenty years of his life, speak of him as a "good neighbor." He was not brilliant, but he was kind; he was not ambitious, neither was he lazy. Physically short and stout, he was always in good health

[1] Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. 1, p. 74.

until his last illness, which came upon him late in the fall of 1850. Word was sent to his son advising him of his serious condition. A few days before his death there came a letter from Abraham so filled with religious piety that one who could call him an atheist must convict him of being a hypocrite:[1]

"I sincerely hope Father may recover his health; but at all events tell him to remember to call upon and confide in, our great and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of the sparrow, and the numbers of hairs of our heads, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him. Say to him that, if we could meet now, it is doubtful whether it would be more painful than pleasant but if it is his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyful meeting with loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the Mercy of God, hope ere long to join them."

In the year that followed his father's death it was the courage of Abraham Lincoln that saved his stepmother's property from being dissipated. Her son wanted to sell the farm, including her dower interest. He dreamed of moving to Missouri and with the money from the sale beginning over. Mr. Lincoln wrote from Springfield, November 25, 1851, to John D. Johnston:

"She now has the use of the whole east forty, as long as she lives, and if it be sold she is entitled to the interest on all of the money it brings as long as she lives; but you propose to sell it for three hundred dollars, take one hundred away with you, and leave her two hundred at eight percent, making her the enormous sum of sixteen dollars a year! Now if you are satisfied in

[1] Selby, Paul, *Stories and Speeches of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 254.

treating her that way, I am not. It is true that you are to have the forty for two hundred dollars at Mother's death; but you are not to have it before. I am confident that the land can be made to produce for Mother at least $30 a year, and I cannot, to oblige any living person, consent that she shall be put on an allowance of sixteen dollars a year."

Such a determined attitude held the Lincoln farm intact. It was to this place that the President-elect later came on his final visit. All witnesses of the event are now gone, but trees and shrubs cared for by the family speak in noble eloquence of home frugality. If you really want to know the simplicity of Abraham Lincoln, if you desire to mingle with the people he understood and loved, then visit, as I did, the Shiloh country churchyard two miles from the old home. There in the shadows of the red brick church gather the gentle country folk to speak in tenderness and love of their departed. There they stand on ground where Lincoln stood. There they linger about the tombs with a freedom of intimate companionship. There in a prairie of fields and stream and pasture hillsides you will find a contentment, the quiet of sublime understanding. Somehow one feels as he walks among them that he is very near to the heart of Lincoln and his people.

Even with the improvements of rural highways it is still a difficult undertaking to reach the country. I lost the way several times. Attempts to mark the route in recent years have not been entirely successful. There are too many side roads to lead one astray. It was not until the spring of 1923, at the suggestion of Wayne Townley of Bloomington, district governor of the Lions

Club, that the trail was outlined and a year later through the combined efforts of Lions Clubs all over Illinois that a monument was raised over the graves.[1] There was a monument on the lot erected many years before by Robert T. Lincoln, a grandson, but souvenir hunters had chipped away its corners and a part of the surface. This has been moved to the entrance of the cemetery.

In cooperation with state highway officials, it is planned ultimately to develop the Thomas Lincoln Trail, marked by an orange circle in which are written "T. L. T.", so that starting at Mattoon it will pass by Buck's Grove, where Thomas Lincoln in 1831 built his first log cabin in Pleasant Grove township; through the village of Lerna, where one-half mile south are the foundation rocks on which he built his second log cabin in 1834; along the road by Shiloh Cemetery, where Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Lincoln are buried, and two miles further southeastward to the Lincoln farm, where the father and stepmother of the President died. The three Lincoln cabins in the neighborhood disappeared long ago. Nature has again draped these sacred sites with vine and grass; their history is a tale.

Eastward from the cemetery one mile, the road forks left and right into what is known as the Charleston-Greenup highway over which Lincoln traveled. The left turn northward takes one to Charleston through Farmington. To the east, along the road leading south less than a mile is the Thomas Lincoln homestead of one hundred twenty acres—a rectangular field eighty rods north and south and two hundred forty rods east

[1] *Services in Memory of Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln,* May 16, 1924, published by Illinois Lions Clubs, pp. 1-32.

and west. The D. A. R. of Charleston has placed a descriptive tablet beside the highway near the farm's southwestern corner.

Soon I began to observe homely things—fences and crops that must give satisfaction to a landowner. The country was rolling. We walked up the long southern margin of the field, charmed with lands open and productive. There was a music in earth and sunshine that was soft and insistent. I recall that the air had its own penetrating odor, perfumes of grass and corn. In the ramble, we passed a deserted farm home, brown and weather-beaten.

Two ravines cross the Lincoln acres making a pleasing shift in the landscape. There are few trees. Shrubs grow around the cabin site from which we viewed level vistas under cultivation. The blue skyline of the afternoon melts into a yellow horizon—a typical agricultural landscape. Examining the ground we found earth-scarred markings of the cabin foundation nearly twelve rods back from the roadway. The soil pressed mellow underfoot which I thought was significant of its fecundity. Maybe I am overglorifying this country, but I liked its lands, its verdant pastures and its growing crops.

"Who owns the Lincoln farm now?" I inquired of a neighbor.

"There are three owners," he responded. I sensed in his exultant tone that he was one of them.

"The Chamber of Commerce of Charleston and Mattoon has purchased one parcel; William Phipps a second, but the eighteen acres where the log cabin stood is owned by John Martin of Sullivan, Illinois. The Shiloh Lincoln Memorial Club of Janesville has plans

for the purchase of the Martin property with a view of transforming it into a public park in which on the original spot will be erected a replica of the Lincoln log cabin as it appeared when Mr. Lincoln came for his visit."

As I turned along these roads away from the noise of railroad and city, I thought of the Lincoln family and their deserted farms and I pitied them with a sad heart. They had claimed the land, toiled hard for a living, but how little of their story is remembered? There is not even a picture of Thomas Lincoln and only one of the stepmother extant.

One other scene is etched like a pageant of triumph in the story of this common countryside. Can you see the thoughtful, melancholy Lincoln, before he takes the helm of government, as he comes here on a visit? Can you picture the words of comfort, the inward, downcast feelings that must have swept him as he measured their uneventful lives? Maybe it was these scenes that arose in memory later to give courage to a harassed soul.

Anyway as the time for his departure for Washington neared, Abraham Lincoln became the more anxious to see his stepmother and her daughters. Accompanied part of the way by Henry C. Whitney, an old time circuit-riding friend, he took the train at Springfield on February 1, for Tolono, where a change was made to reach Mattoon and another change for Charleston. Short as the distance now seems, it was a trip that then required an entire day.[1] Throughout the route the people were anxious to greet the President-

[1] For details of trip see John W. Starr, Jr., *Lincoln and the Railroads,* pp. 164-171.

elect and he had little time to himself. One man he met long remembered the occasion. Joseph G. Cannon, many years afterward Speaker of the House of Representatives, then a young lawyer, has recalled the incident with great satisfaction.

"Already there were threats of war, of secession and of assassination, but he was the same cordial, unassuming, seemingly commonplace man," said Mr. Cannon.[1] "I was on the train going from Tuscola to Mattoon and met Mr. Lincoln, who was also on the train, going to Charleston to pay a visit to his stepmother, who lived at Farmington, a few miles from that place. He was of course the most distinguished man on the train and was constantly surrounded by people who wanted to shake hands and have a word with him. But he was just one of the passengers in the day coach. He had no bodyguard. I exchanged only a few words with him because everyone was so anxious to meet him."

The train missed connections at Mattoon, and Lincoln had to take a freight to Charleston, where he was to spend the night at the home of Colonel A. H. Chapman, who was married to a daughter of Dennis Hanks, a companion from boyhood. Awaiting the train at the Charleston depot was James A. Connolly, for many years afterward a practicing lawyer at Springfield.

"When the train finally drew in and stopped, the locomotive was almost opposite the station, and the caboose, or car which carried the passengers, was some distance down the track," related Mr. Connolly years after.[2] "Presently looking in that direction we saw a tall man, wearing a coat or shawl, descend from the

[1] Buseby, L. White, *Uncle Joe Cannon*, pp. 108-116.
[2] Weik, Jesse W., *The Real Lincoln*, p. 294.

steps of the car and patiently make his way through the long expanse of slush and ice beside the track as far as the station platform. I think he wore a plug hat. I remember I was surprised that a railroad company, with so distinguished a passenger aboard its train as the President-elect of the United States, did not manifest interest enough in his dignity and comfort to deliver him at the station instead of dropping him off in the mud several hundred feet down the track."

After shaking hands with a few friends, Mr. Lincoln, carrying his well-worn carpet bag, left for the home of Colonel Chapman, where many people gathered that evening at an informal reception. The next morning Lincoln and Chapman got into a two-horse buggy and drove to Farmington.

There is no one to tell us of the home reception that afternoon in February when Abraham Lincoln came back to his people. From the doorway of her earth-colored log cabin the anxious mother watched him arrive.[1] In the gladness of the meeting there must have been tears. An inevitable tragic touch is always present in such a reunion, shadowed by the memories of those who have departed. They talked into the night of things known only to the fireside. Two days or more were spent among the neighbors. Once he drove over to the home of Isaac Rodgers and asked him to care for his father's grave during his absence. For more than sixty years members of the Rodgers family

1 "'This house was sold to a corporation just before the World's Fair and exhibited at Chicago. No one appears to know what became of it.' (Dr. J. G. Baker, Mattoon.) Mrs. Eleanor Gridley, Chicago, who gave Lincoln talks in this cabin during the World's Fair, meeting many Lincoln friends, believes Mr. Lincoln met his stepmother at Farmington. The chimney at the old log cabin had collapsed making the house temporarily untenantable." Letter to author March 12, 1929.

discharged this sacred duty, until in 1922 the Shiloh Lincoln Memorial Club of Janesville was organized to perpetuate the trust.[1]

"Lincoln came to my father's house in February, 1861, before he was inaugurated, and asked my father to go with him to his father's grave," recalled Mrs. Susan D. Baker, Mr. Rodgers' daughter, in a memoir prepared shortly before her death in 1927. "They went over to the old cemetery where Lincoln stood by his father's grave and wept, saying the country was approaching a critical time and that he never expected to get back here again—and he never did."

Next day Mrs. Lincoln returned with him to Charleston. On the way they stopped at a little one-story frame house in Farmington for dinner. As the years rolled by this building has become a mecca recently marked by a tablet. It appears much as it did in Lincoln's day.

"There are three men still living who as children in school saw Mr. Lincoln that day," Mr. R. B. Rodgers, Janesville, the secretary of the Shiloh Lincoln Memorial Club, told me. "They are Thomas Allison, Charleston; John Best, Janesville, and George Balch, Lerna, all living in the immediate neighborhood."

Not until I had a picture of these three friends of Lincoln taken before the Farmington wayside place was I content. The building, with its narrow clapboards, stubby chimney protruding above the ridgeboard, low roof and narrow porch seemed so fitting a landmark of Lincoln's simplicity, that I felt happy to have traveled that way. The nearly seventy years have not dimmed the precious recollections of these three

[1] Supplement to *Lerna Weekly Eagle,* Lerna, Ill., February, 1928.

men, who as school boys shook hands with the President-elect and heard his few words of encouragement before he left for Charleston. There he parted with his stepmother, who said that something told her they would never again meet.

"God bless you and keep you, my good son," she sobbed. But Lincoln's eyes were blurred with tears and his voice too choked to give further answer. He disappeared down the street.

Both were to face an unvisioned Gethsemane. She to be persecuted in war hatred by men who were to fail in their wicked designs to convict her of a thievery which might dishonor her son.[1] He had so many worries that he never learned of hers. Years went by and then neighbors came and told her that he had gone the way to martyrdom.

[1] Busbey, *Ibid.*, pp. 108-116.

CHAPTER XIX

FAREWELL AT THE GREAT WESTERN STATION

A LIMITED train flashes with a hiss into the Wabash station every morning at Springfield, Illinois, leaving in its wake an eddying whirl of dust mixed with smoke and steam. Standing near the crossing at Tenth and Monroe Streets early one May day, I watched the coaches vanish as the stiffening brakes screeched for the stop at the passenger station two blocks beyond.

When the din was over and the watchman had signaled the traffic through, I looked about. Above me extended the eaves of the Wabash freight office—the former passenger station of the Great Western lines before the system was absorbed. I had come to the vicinity searching for this very building; for it was here that Abraham Lincoln bade farewell to Springfield on the morning of February 11, 1861, and started on his twelve-day journey to Washington. That wonder of railroad achievement, which carried him away, would be but a toy compared with the driving locomotives that now plow over the same right-of-way.

Throughout the nation there are thousands of railroad stations as gray and busy as the old Wabash freight house. But none has witnessed a sadder scene. Wherever the eye strays or the imagination catches a point on which it can revel for the moment, dark shadows in the life of Lincoln present themselves in a never-failing panorama of pathos.

What must have been the thoughts of those sorrowing neighbors who heard his last words imploring their prayers? What premonitions of danger to him did they secretly keep in their hearts? And what must have been his own mind, when he stood in the doorway of the rear car and took his last look at Springfield as he was borne away to a "task greater than that which rested upon Washington?"

"I know of nothing in history more pathetic than the scene when Lincoln bade good-by to his old friends and neighbors," declared his old associate, Isaac N. Arnold, years afterward.

"Every hat was lifted and every head bent forward," wrote a reporter in *The Springfield Journal,* upon his return from the scene.

Swinging around to the east, and looking down Monroe Street, with its stores and household plots, I recalled the story of his last hours in Springfield.

A few days before leaving for Washington he had held a public levee in his own home. Then the place was rented and he moved his family to the Chenery House,[1] the leading hotel in Springfield. During the interval some of the household furniture was sold; affairs at the law office were put into order; arrangements were made for the trip and copies of the speeches he would deliver on his journey to Washington were prepared.

A week before the departure W. S. Wood of New York, a friend of William H. Seward, already chosen by Mr. Lincoln as his Secretary of State, arrived to take charge of all transportation arrangements. Since

[1] Northeast corner of Fourth and Washington Streets, Springfield, where the Illinois Hotel now stands.

the election scores of invitations had been received from cities to speak on his journey eastward. It was finally announced that he would accept the tenders of the legislatures of Indiana, Ohio, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The invitation of Massachusetts was declined as being too far from the route of travel. Scheduled stops were to be made at Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Columbus, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, New York, Trenton, Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

Sleeping compartments on trains were just being perfected and were seldom demanded by the public. The presidential tour was arranged so that rest would be obtained at hotels. It was not until the last day before departure that every detail of the trip had been completed.

Arising earlier than usual, Mr. Lincoln came down to the hotel office, and refusing the proffered help of attendants, roped his own baggage and then taking a hotel card wrote his address:

A. Lincoln,
White House,
Washington, D. C.

Tacking the card to his trunk, he took another, penned his address upon it and gave it to the daughter of the hotel landlady. Soon the omnibus backed up to the hotel steps, and with a few handshakes Mr. Lincoln was off for the depot, seven blocks away.

An impromptu reception was held in the waiting room for a few minutes, but precisely at five minutes to eight, Mr. Lincoln, preceded by Mr. Wood, edged

his way through a crowd of about a thousand to the rear coach.

What a mixed gathering it was! Old men who had known Mr. Lincoln all his years in Springfield, neighbors who had been accustomed to talk with him as he passed to his office, men of affairs, dressed in new suits and overcoats, who were to go part way on the journey. Here and there was an old woman, whom Lincoln had probably advised in days of trouble. All were quiet, as if the misty morning had silenced their exuberance. They spoke in low whispers and crowded closely.

Reaching the platform, Lincoln paused a moment as if to regain his composure. He had not intended to make a speech. But as the bell began to ring and he looked down into those anxious faces, he removed his hat and stepping forward said:

"My Friends: No one not in my situation can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

During the address a light rain was falling, but every

head was bared. When in tones that touched his hearers with reverential awe, he said that with God's help he would not fail, there was an uncontrollable burst of applause. Those who heard him never failed to declare that no word painting could convey the strained attention, the eager countenances of that assemblage. It required an artist, but none was there. The shades of feeling which elude the description were occasioned by the solemn words, the subdued emotion and his own sad countenance. The gloom of the day vied with the solemnity of the parting.

As he uttered the last words the train moved slowly away, but Mr. Lincoln remained on the platform and viewed for the last time the receding picture of the little, two-story, white house, two blocks from the station, that had been his home for over fifteen years.

The flagman at the crossing broke my revery:

"Looking over the old station where Lincoln left?"

"Why, yes!" I stammered.

"Building's been changed some," he continued. "Painted the brick gray a few years ago and put up that monument with his speech on it before the door."

I turned in the direction. Within a heavy iron fence, a stone slab has been erected. On one side are the words of the speech in bronze and on the other the date. A green wreath and May day flowers placed there by some lover of Lincoln were withering in the bright sunlight.

Then I peered in the window and through a slit between two boxes I could see the main part of the old waiting room. The stove and the benches were gone. Not a vestige of the furniture used at the impromptu reception was there.

"Did all of the Lincolns leave at that time?" I asked the crossing-tender. He had worked there a long time and had gathered many of the stories told about the old building.

"Mrs. Lincoln and the two sons, William and Thomas, went away the night before, but joined the official party at Indianapolis," he explained.

The presidential party numbered about fifteen besides the special reporters for the leading newspapers. It consisted of Robert T. Lincoln, the eldest son, who had returned from college to accompany his father; Dr. W. S. Wallace, a brother-in-law of Mr. Lincoln; Lockwood Todd, a relative of Mrs. Lincoln; his two secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay; Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth, a friend of the Lincolns, who was to die early in battle; Judge David Davis of the old Eighth Circuit, soon to be appointed to the United States Supreme bench, and a number of other officers and citizens of Springfield, many of whom returned after the party had left Indianapolis.

All along the route the masses showed the greatest interest, waving from their doorsteps in the country and gathering in little knots at the smaller stations. The train, which traveled at a speed of thirty miles an hour, consisted of an engine, baggage-car and coach, preceded by a pilot engine to insure safety.

Before leaving the scene I searched through a package of notes for a description I had preserved of the receptions en route. I found it was a statement given to Ida M. Tarbell when she was gathering Lincoln reminiscences [1] in Illinois many years ago. It was the story told by Thomas Ross, the brakeman of the train as far as the state line:

[1] Tarbell, Vol. II, pp. 205-206.

"The enthusiasm all along the line was intense. As we whirled through the country villages, we caught a cheer from the people and a glimpse of waving handkerchiefs and of hats tossed high into the air. Wherever we stopped there was a great rush to shake hands with Mr. Lincoln, though of course only a few could reach him. The crowds looked as if they included the whole population. There were women and children, there were young men, and there were old men with grey beards. It was soul-stirring to see those white-whiskered old fellows, many of whom had known Lincoln in his humbler days, join in the cheering, and hear them shout after him, 'Good-by, Abe. Stick to the constitution and we will stick to you.' It was my good fortune to stand beside Lincoln at each place at which he spoke—at Decatur and Danville. At the state line the train stopped for dinner, 'Gentlemen,' said he, as he surveyed the crowd, 'if you will make me a little path so I can get through and get something to eat, I will make you a speech when I get back.'

"I never knew where all the people came from. They were not only in the towns and villages, but many were along the track in the country, just to get a glimpse of the President's train. I remember that, after passing Bement, we crossed a trestle, I was greatly interested to see a man standing there with a shot-gun. As the train passed he presented arms. I have often thought he was there, a volunteer to watch the trestle, and to see that the President's train got over it in safety. As I have said, the people everywhere were wild. Everybody wanted to shake hands with Lincoln, and he would have to say: 'My friends, I would like to shake hands with all of you, but I can't do it.' At

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Danville I well remember seeing him thrust his long arm over several heads to shake hands with George Lawrence. Walter Whitney, the conductor, who went on to Indianapolis, told me when he got back that, after Lincoln got into a carriage, men got hold of the hubs and carried the vehicle for a whole block. At the state line I left the train, and returned to Springfield, having passed the biggest day in my whole life."

Weary and travel-worn, Abraham Lincoln entered Washington twelve days later, one day ahead of his schedule. He had made fifty speeches en route and while in Albany had received the news that Jefferson Davis had been inaugurated as President of the Confederacy. At Harrisburg came the rumor that an effort might be made to assassinate "the Prince of Rails," as some of the newspapers called Lincoln in derision, when the train reached Baltimore.

Employing a ruse and accompanied by Ward H. Lamon, a lawyer friend from Illinois, and Allan Pinkerton, the detective, Mr. Lincoln used a special train to carry him back to Philadelphia and arrived in Washington at 6 o'clock Saturday morning, February 23.

Congressman Elihu B. Washburne of Illinois was standing behind a post, waiting. He had been requested to meet the train. It was several minutes after the stop before the three descended.

"How are you, Lincoln?" asked Washburne as the President stepped to the platform. The detectives appeared startled and surrounded the President.

"It's only Washburne," Lincoln explained.

Then the party proceeded to a waiting carriage to take them to the Willard Hotel. The official train

came through on regular schedule on the evening of the same day, unmolested.

The journey which had started with so much friendliness at the Great Western Station had ended in utter loneliness at Washington.

May it not be that in his waking hours this first night in Washington he saw the upturned and tear-stained faces that crowded the tracks at Springfield and in his dreams heard the imploring whispers of their fervent prayers for his safety?

CHAPTER XX

BYWAYS OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

MORE places in Washington are vividly associated with Abraham Lincoln than with any other President since John Adams moved his family to the White House in the fall of 1800, while the building was still under construction. His spirit seems to pervade the pathway that leads from the White House to the War Department where he spent many evening hours getting the last telegraphic word from the battlefront; Pennsylvania Avenue where he frequently shopped for toys; New York Avenue Presbyterian Church where he bowed in worship; the Capitol where a war Congress was in session. It seems to follow you to the scenes of battlefields near Washington, to old Alexandria, or to the Anderson cottage, at the Old Soldiers' home—the first summer White House, where Lincoln often went for rest in the hot season.

At the White House itself the shadow of his tall form seems to fall across its colonial entrance, where during the early days of his administration hordes of office-seekers came asking appointments; where an almost endless line of plain people entered on reception days.

"I think of Lincoln, shambling, homely, with his strong, sad, deep-furrowed face, all the time," Theodore Roosevelt once observed. "I see him in the different rooms and in the halls. For some reason or other he

is to me infinitely the most real of the dead Presidents."

Before the inauguration there were moments of apprehension. Not a day passed that some plot against the President-elect was not unfolded to him at his temporary headquarters in the Willard Hotel. These gave him little worry. He went forward with his work, exhibiting the utmost serenity, receiving callers and even holding a public reception. Shortly before noon on Monday, March 4, 1861, escorted by President Buchanan, he was driven down Pennsylvania Avenue, following a route that every President since Thomas Jefferson had taken, to receive publicly the oath of office at the Capitol.

But the scene at this inauguration was markedly different from any in the past. Militia lined the way and the official carriage was surrounded by a regular formation of troops. At the north entrance, Lincoln, on the arm of President Buchanan, entered a board tunnel guarded by riflemen. Quickly they passed to the Senate Chamber, crowded with members and diplomatic delegations. After a brief ceremony, the procession, led by the Justices of the Supreme Court, moved to the historic east portico of the Capitol. Soldiers pressed close to the temporary platform which had been erected for the occasion. The air was tense with expectancy. General Winfield Scott had ordered that "if any of them show their heads or raise a finger, blow them to hell." Under such threats there was no disturbance.

Lincoln appeared calm. He carried a cane and a roll of manuscript. Observing that he did not know where to place his hat, Senator Douglas, his presidential opponent of a few months before, volunteered assist-

ance. Doing so he remarked to a friend that if he "could not be President himself he could at least hold the President's hat." An old-time Springfield friend, Senator Edward D. Baker of Oregon, presented him to the audience. At the conclusion of his inaugural address, a plea for the preservation of the Union, the oath was administered by Chief Justice Roger Taney. Judge Taney's decision in the Dred Scott case a few years before had lighted the fuse for the impending catastrophe. Lincoln kissed the red-velvet bound Bible, which has since found its way to the Congressional Library as one of its most cherished exhibits. A salute boomed from the hillside. Then the new President was hurried away.

"Up to the top of the steps where Lincoln spoke," announced my companion who advanced two treads at a time.

On the entrance landing we turned to face the Congressional Library, since built, and the separate offices of the Senate and House, and gazed upward at the Capitol dome only partly completed during Lincoln's administration.

"There is only one Lincoln landmark of importance still standing," observed my companion after scanning the skyline.

"Where is it?"

"It's the old Capitol which served as a seat of government for four years from 1815 to 1819 until the building destroyed by the British was sufficiently restored for legislative purposes," and he pointed to a tarnished red brick structure, directly before us, flaunting the sign of the National Woman's Party. "During

the Civil War it was used as a prison for persons accused of disloyalty."

Down to the street again, past hedges of green and bushes with wax-like leaves, we came to Pennsylvania Avenue. As we drove away on the route to the White House where the withered, whitened Buchanan had escorted Lincoln, a backward glance gave a scene of the Capitol rising proudly in unity and compactness —the dream of Lincoln fulfilled.

Within less than an hour after the ceremony, the President crossed the threshold of his home for the next four years. In the few hours of brief merrymaking that were to follow, he had no premonition of the sorrow, the days of anxious waiting, the crushing burdens, which were to enslave him by day and haunt him through sleepless nights.

In the evening the inaugural ball danced its way across the floor of the "white muslin palace of Aladdin," surrounded by the fashionable homes of the city erected in Judiciary Square. Today the park scene is bleak in winter, but blithesome when green and shade-flecked in summer. Lincoln's ball-room took its name from the hundreds of yards of white with which the hall was festooned. It was the last of its kind. Future balls were to be held in the Pension Offices.

The Lincolns were greeted in a promenade, while the band played "Hail The Chief." Plump Mrs. Lincoln in her handsome dress of blue was much admired. The President spent most of his time receiving personal congratulations from those who wished to be presented. A few afternoons later, the first public reception held at the White House became history.

"We have had no particular excitement since I wrote

you, except the reception on Friday night which was voted by the oldest inhabitants to have been the most successful ever held here," John G. Nicolay, private secretary to the President, advised his family in a hurried note.[1] "For over two hours the crowd poured in as rapidly as the door would admit them, and many climbed in at the windows. It was withal more 'tonish' than such things usually are. Of course in such a crowd crinoline suffered and at least fifty men have been swearing worse than 'our army in Flanders' ever since, over the loss of new hats and valuable overcoats."

Rejoicing was soon submerged in the business of governing. With Southern states seceding and the departments crumbling by resignation and desertion of officials, President Lincoln was prompt in announcing a cabinet, which began the work of reorganization. The day following his inauguration he sent to the Senate these names: William H. Seward, New York, Secretary of State; Salmon P. Chase, Ohio, Secretary of the Treasury; Simeon Cameron, Pennsylvania, Secretary of War; Gideon Welles, Connecticut, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith, Indiana, Secretary of the Interior; Edward Bates, Missouri, Attorney General; and Montgomery Blair, Missouri, Postmaster General. Several of these appointees were not in harmony with the President at the beginning of his administration, but they soon became convinced of Lincoln's ability. Seward wrote astoundingly to the President suggesting himself as helmsman, but found that Lincoln was to be master.

When we visited the White House and stood beside

[1] Nicolay, Helen, *Our Capital on the Potomac,* p. 361; Tarbell, *Life of Lincoln,* Vol. III, pp. 29-31, reprints the correspondence.

the inlaid gold coat-of-arms of the United States at the threshold of the large entrance hall, I could not help but vision the motley crowd of office-seekers that swarmed the place and harassed President Lincoln in those first days of his administration. His office was on the second floor south of the entrance where we were standing. From the middle upper window over the stately vestibule, where visitors enter, Lincoln made many of his impromptu speeches.

"The ground halls, stairways, closets, are filled with applicants, who render ingress and egress difficult," Secretary Seward wrote. For twelve hours a day President Lincoln tried to see visitors. A new party had come into power and the victors demanded the spoils.

"I feel like a man letting lodging at one end of the house while the other end is on fire," he sighed, after weeks of persistent efforts to reduce the horde.

Office-seekers attempted to present their credentials when they saw him in public.

"No! No!" declared Lincoln indignantly to one applicant who tried to stop his carriage. "I refuse to open up shop in the street."

Members of the family, his son Robert at Harvard, his old neighbors were hounded by the hungry job-hunters. When, after the Gettysburg trip, he contracted varioloid, the disease served to hold them at bay for a while.

"What's the matter, Mr. Lincoln?" asked a friend one day when he found the President particularly dejected. "Has anything gone wrong at the front?"

"No!" responded the President, attempting to smile. "It isn't the war; it's the post-office at Brownsville, Missouri."

Our visit disclosed that many changes had been made in the White House since Lincoln's time. Close to the west, where the Lincolns had a vegetable garden and strawberry patch, an executive office building, containing a cabinet room, was erected in 1903 for the President. The business offices of the President are still on the second floor of the executive mansion.

When Mr. Lincoln lived in the White House, the domestic apartments and business offices co-mingled. The family lived upstairs in the west end of the building and the offices were in the east end. His children often invaded the business conferences. Mr. Lincoln's office and bedroom fronted the south and were but a few doors apart. From his office window by the use of a spy glass he would scan the Virginia hills when the near approach of the enemy threatened. Within this office were granted hundreds of pardons for which he was severely criticised by generals who feared his leniency would disorganize the army.

"Let no one who wants to present a pardon matter leave without seeing me," was Lincoln's direction to the doorkeeper. So many applications showed individual cowardice that the President came to call all such "leg cases," to distinguish them from the other classes.

The oak bed in which Lincoln slept is still used in one of the guest chambers. The partitions erected so he could go from his office to the apartments in fancied invisibility, but really to the amusement of visitors on the other side of the screen who saw his upstanding forelock exposed as he passed, were removed long ago.[1]

[1] Crook, William H., *Through Five Administrations*, pp. 11-13.

Now only by special permission from the President's family may these rooms be visited.

"Many a night after the house was quiet, the troubled Lincoln came and sat before that fireplace in the Blue Room and thought out ways to meet the increasing difficulties," the guide told us. "Those andirons of polished brass were here when he was here. The mantle clock, the present from Napoleon to Lafayette, and given by the latter to the United States, gave him the time."

Trouble and sorrow beset Lincoln every day he lived in the White House. Scarcely had he entered its doors after the inauguration when a telegram was handed him from Major Robert Anderson in command of Fort Sumter saying that it must be immediately provisioned or it would have to be evacuated. The first cabinet meeting wrestled with the problem, but its members were divided.

"What shall be done?" Lincoln asked General Scott.

"Evacuate," replied the General, who pointed out that it would take 20,000 men to hold the place and there were only 16,000 in the army.

"Never! Never!" declared Lincoln. "When Anderson goes out of Fort Sumter, I shall have to go out of the White House."

The country clamored for action. On April 6, he ordered a relief expedition to sail from New York and notified the governor of South Carolina that the federal government intended to provision the fort. When the South definitely learned it was to be re-inforced, a bombardment was opened on April 12, and within a day the resistance of Major Anderson was silenced. Fort Sumter had fallen. Civil war had begun. The life of the Union was now at stake.

On April 15 President Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 militia, appealing to loyal citizens to "maintain the honor, the integrity and the existence of our National union." Temporarily cut off from the North, Washington was threatened with famine, and flour and supplies had to be commandeered. Baltimore refused to allow troops to pass.

"We must have troops, and as they can neither crawl under Maryland nor fly over it they must come across it," was the President's peremptory order.

Days dragged on and no troops arrived. The suspense began to shake the moral fiber of the people in Washington.

"Why don't they come! Why don't they come!" he exclaimed as he paced his office floor and scanned the Potomac for their landing.

Soon the city of Washington became a scene of Union men in training. With the secession of Virginia and the announcement of Robert E. Lee that he would throw his fortunes with the Old Dominion, the Confederacy moved its capitol from Montgomery, Alabama, to Richmond, one hundred and twenty miles away. Congress came into session on July 4. While voting supplies the members did not realize the seriousness of the situation. The rout of the Union forces at the first battle of Bull Run on July 21, witnessed by many hopeful Congressmen, awakened the nation. Then the government settled down to a serious war business.

"On to Richmond," echoed the demand from the North, while the army appeared inactive. Reverses came with each new movement in the East. But Grant's victories in the West sustained the morale.

Only with a lack of confidence after a series of defeats was one general displaced by another.[1] McClellan followed Scott and then came Halleck, Burnside, Hooker, Meade, until on March 3, 1864, Grant was placed in command of all the armies.

Every encouragement was given the generals by the President. He followed them to the fields of battle. In May, 1862, with Secretaries Stanton and Chase, he spent several days at Fortress Monroe, going there by boat, and there witnessed the engagement which gave Norfolk to the Union forces. In July he consulted with General McClellan at Harrison's Landing. After the battle of Antietam he visited the scene of Harper's Ferry to ascertain why the federal forces had allowed the enemy to escape. During later months, he counselled with his generals at Aquia Creek and Falmouth and in April, 1863, spent nearly a week with the army in the vicinity of Fredericksburg.

Absences of the President from Washington were on rare occasions and for only a few days. His time was spent at the White House advising with members of Congress, or giving courage to generals who should have brought him courage. He followed the war with such minute detail that the map which he kept in the cabinet room was black with fingermarks from frequent examination. Passing time changed him. He grew more tired and careworn. Few were the opportunities for recreation.

Late in the afternoon he frequently went for a ride with Mrs. Lincoln around Washington, stopping to visit at some one of the more than thirty army camps,

[1] McCartney, Clarence E., *Lincoln and His Generals.* Johnson, Rossiter, *The Fight for the Republic.*

or at the hospitals. A few of the lines of these old fortresses are still discernible on the outskirts of the city.

Oftimes on the return he stopped at a shop on Pennsylvania Avenue close to the White House to buy some toy to take home.

Seldom an evening passed that he did not go for late reports to the telegraph room of the old War Department. This building stood at the west of the White House and was torn down in 1879 to make room for the State, War and Navy Building.[1] The White House had no key of its own.

Our hours of sitting and dreaming while waiting did not dispel Lincoln's gentle presence from the rooms where he lived. For a while we stood on the steps of the White House surveying the lawn, with its spreading trees under which he so often walked and where the crowd gathered on many an occasion demanding a word from his lips. Down the pathway, toward the State, War and Navy Building, is a lane along which he passed daily to the telegraph office. I thought of him awkwardly saluting the guards as he went. Then we followed in his earlier footsteps.

"Mr. Lincoln's tall, homely form could be seen crossing the well-shaded lawn between the White House and the War Department day after day with unvaried regularity," David Homer Bates, manager of the War Department telegraph office, wrote after the President's death.[2] "In cool weather he invariably wore a gray plaid shawl thrown over his shoulders in careless

[1] Bates, David Homer, *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office;* pp. 7-8; Clark, Allen C., *Abraham Lincoln in the National Capitol,* pp. 9-92.
[2] Bates, *Ibid.,* pp. 7-8.

fashion, and, upon entering the telegraph office, he would always hang this shawl over the top of the high screen door opening into Secretary Stanton's office, adjoining. The door was nearly always open. He seldom failed to come over late in the evening before retiring, and sometimes he would stay all night in the War Department. When returning to the White House after dark, he was frequently accompanied by Major Eckert and nearly always by a small guard of soldiers. He sometimes protested against this latter precaution, but Secretary Stanton's orders to the guard were imperative."

Within this room Lincoln received the word that his friend Colonel Ellsworth had been shot at the Jackson House, Alexandria, May 24, 1861, the first poignant grief to come to him at the opening of the war. The funeral was held from the East Room of the White House. From this office he sent the message summoning Grant to come to Washington, after his successes in the West. Here from Lincoln, then with General Grant at City Point, was received on April 3, 1865, the first word that Richmond had fallen. When the old War Department building was razed, one of the most intimate haunts of Abraham Lincoln was destroyed.

Even the week-end brought him no leisure. On Sundays he frequently sought consolation at church services. New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, attended by the President and his family, is an interesting landmark. The cross of white on its pediment standing out against the red brick background arrests one's attention in making the approach. Dr. P. D. Gurley was pastor at the time and became one of Mr. Lincoln's most intimate friends.

LINCOLN'S SUMMER HOME (LEFT)

"Although the church has been remodeled and new furnishings installed, the Lincoln pew was not disturbed," explained the secretary as she led the way toward the pulpit. "The pew is much smaller than the others. Mr. Lincoln selected his own seat close to the front of the church, explaining that he enjoyed a good sermon and wanted to hear every word."

Recently a Lincoln memorial tower has been added to the church under singular circumstances, in that the gift was made by Mrs. Robert T. Lincoln and her family and the bell was cast in a factory owned by descendants of Nancy Hanks Lincoln's family.

Other places about Washington are dear for their associations. No less historic as a shrine to Abraham Lincoln is the Anderson cottage at the northern outskirts of Washington on the grounds of the Soldiers' Home. To escape the heat and the insistent pleas of office-seekers, Mr. Lincoln found it convenient to move his summer residence to this secluded reservation. A few servants were maintained at the White House so that in emergency the President might spend the night there. Usually at the close of the day's work and often late at night he hastened to the stone cottage on the outskirts to spend as much time as possible with his family and invited friends.[1]

At first these trips were made unaccompanied. One night a bullet coming from an unknown source pierced his tall hat. Afterward a cavalry escort was detailed to accompany him. Walt Whitman, his poet-friend,[2]

[1] Brooks, Noah, *Abraham Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery*, pp. 422-423; McBride, Robert, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 53-57.

[2] Whitman, Walt, *Specimen Days*, in Complete Prose Works, p. 43.

has left a description of Lincoln's cavalcade coming daily into the city:

"The party makes no great show in uniform and horses. Mr. Lincoln on the saddle generally rides a good-sized, easy going, gray horse, is dressed in plain black, somewhat rusty and dusty, wears a black stiff hat, and looks about as ordinary in attire as the ordinary man. A lieutenant with yellow straps rides at his left, and following behind, two by two, come the cavalry men in their yellow striped jackets. They are generally going at a slow trot, as that is the pace set them by the one they must wait upon. The sabres and accoutrements clank and the entirely unornamental cortège as it trots toward Lafayette Square arouses no sensation, only some curious stranger stops and gazes."

We went for a tour of the military grounds and a visit to the Anderson cottage, because it was there that President Lincoln had made a re-draft of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation before announcing it on September 22, 1862. To commemorate that single act the old building should be handed down to posterity. The formal proclamation was not issued until three months later, on January 1, 1863. Early in August, 1862, the President had decided upon emancipation. Calling his cabinet together he read them a humorous story from Artemus Ward and then presented the document he had carefully prepared. He invited no comment on the policy, saying he had fully decided upon his course of action. Secretary Seward suggested that a more opportune time should be chosen for its announcement.

"The wisdom of the view of the Secretary of State struck me with very great force," President Lincoln

afterward declared in relating the history of the document.[1] "It was an aspect of the case that, in all my thought upon the subject, I had entirely overlooked. The result was that I put the draft of the proclamation aside, waiting for a victory. From time to time I added or changed a line, touching it up here and there, anxiously waiting the progress of events. Well, the next news we had was of Pope's disaster at Bull Run. Things looked darker than ever. Finally came the week of the battle of Antietam. I determined to wait no longer. The news came, I think, on Wednesday, that the advantage was on our side. I was then staying at the Soldiers' Home. Here I finished writing the second draft of the preliminary proclamation; came up on Saturday; called the cabinet together to hear it, and it was published the following Monday."

The summer White House of Abraham Lincoln is now a hospital for sick and decrepit soldiers. The old stone building of twelve rooms erected in 1810 has undergone few improvements. It overlooks the drill ground; land division lines are marked with borders of luxuriant osage-orange hedges, the roads wind in curves and the whole setting is one of rest and quiet.

A veteran escorted us through the building. A large room near the center of the house, entering upon the veranda, was the President's office. His bedroom occupied the two front windows directly over the porch.

"They tell us he worked over the Emancipation Proclamation at a table near that front window," he told us. When I started to make note of his weighty

[1] Carpenter, F. B., *Six Months in the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 22-23. Mr. Carpenter was the artist engaged in painting the picture of the Emancipation cabinet which hangs in the stairway of the House of Representatives, when President Lincoln related the circumstances to him.

statement he withdrew some of the positiveness of his assurance.

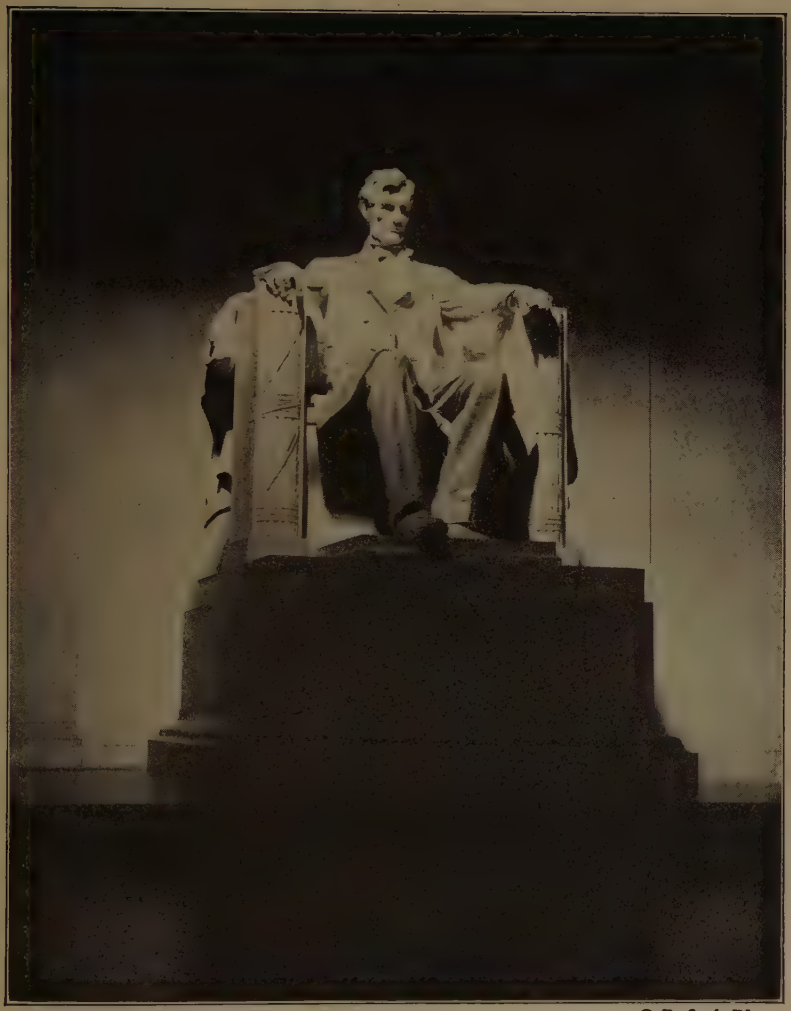
"But, I wasn't there then," he cautiously added. "They have a big library for the soldiers in the adjoining building and maybe you can find it out there."

"Where was it around here that President Lincoln was under the direct fire of the Confederates in July, 1864, when the city was almost captured?"

The question lighted the theme of a drama he had heard the older veterans rehearse many a time. Grant was hammering Lee around Richmond, and to withdraw the fire General Jubal A. Early was detached by Lee to make a demonstration against Washington. Lincoln was staying at the summer White House at the time.

"After defeating General Lew Wallace at Monocacy, General Early started for Fort Stevens," the soldier added, using gestures in increasing excitement. "The fort is only two miles from here near Brightwood, and within sight of the Capitol. Everybody who could bear arms went out to stop the raiders. President Lincoln joined them. Some of the officers tried to keep him under cover, fearing that some of the rebel sharpshooters might pick him off. Lincoln wouldn't listen. He said that as commander of the army he ought to show himself as brave as the soldiers who were doing the fighting. With difficulty they got him away. The Confederates were driven back after a brief skirmish and those killed were buried in the little cemetery near the Methodist Church close to the crumbling parapets."

There is a large sign on Georgia Avenue, the main thoroughfare north from Washington, beside the



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THE GREAT EMANCIPATOR AMID THE NIGHT SHADOWS

Emory Methodist Episcopal Church in Brightwood which tells the story:

FORT STEVENS
WHERE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT ON JULY 11 AND 12, 1864,
GENERAL WRIGHT COMMANDING.
THE SPOT WHERE LINCOLN STOOD IS MARKED
BY A BOULDER IN REAR OF EMORY M. E. CHURCH
WHICH STANDS ON SITE OF OLD MAGAZINE.
PARAPET AND EMBRAZURES ARE STILL VISIBLE.

Lines of breastworks are as obvious today as when Early made his onslaught. The cabins of negro families dot the immediate landscape. A high boulder has been raised on a steep embankment bearing a bronze tablet depicting the scene of the dramatic encounter. It shows President Lincoln wearing a stovepipe hat coolly at work about the fort while under the fire of the guns of the enemy.

But the tablet is neither the tribute of the city of Washington nor of the nation to the courage and wisdom of Abraham Lincoln. It commemorates but a single episode. When you have tired of visiting historic places or threading streets of memory, return to the banks of the Potomac. Close to the river is the Lincoln Memorial—latest of these shrines and noblest of them all. It is not a glorification of war. It is the symbol in terms of a granite palace of the unified love of a country at peace.

If ever you feel as though ushered into divine precincts, it will be when you pass those marble pillars at the entrance to the central hall. The gentle power of the place steals over you. The imposing figure by Daniel Chester French of the war President seated—calm, dignified, reposeful—looks out across the expanse

to the Capitol of the Union he gave his life to save. There is nothing else to detract attention. In the silence of the open view the strange influence of Lincoln abounds. There is no longer an escape from the spirit of his mighty presence.

CHAPTER XXI

ON THE FIELDS OF GETTYSBURG

ROW upon row of graves, like waves receding in a widening semi-circle, radiate from the spot at Gettysburg where Abraham Lincoln stood to dedicate with phrase sublime the great battlefield of the Civil War.

Over undulating fields that spread under a haze toward the Blue Ridge mountains, now studded with state memorials, cannon mounted in battle array and equestrian statues of commanders, the high tide of the rebellion rose for the first two days of July, 1863. It hesitated on the third and then broke, ebbing slowly away toward a surrender at Appomattox.

Towering in calm majesty above the same ground where Lincoln spoke four months later in commemoration of the bloody struggle is the shaft of the United States government. It rises to honor the 90,000 men who stemmed the awful onrush and the 3,700 Union brave who still sleep beneath the soil. Within sound of voice is a Lincoln cenotaph—the "speech memorial" —flanking his bust with panels of bronze presenting the immortal five-minute address he there delivered.

Although President Lincoln obtained greater satisfaction from his later trip to Richmond, when the Confederate capital capitulated, Gettysburg has remained the most memorable of his visits outside of Washington during the years of his presidency.

The city of Gettysburg lies just across the southern

Pennsylvania border, eighty miles north of Washington. Chance made it a battlefield; fate made it the turning-point of the war. Stimulated by the successive defeats of the Union army at Fredericksburg, under General Burnside, on December 13, 1862, where the Union loss reached almost 12,000, and at Chancellorsville from May 1, to May 4, 1863, under General Hooker, where in the hardest fought battle of the war the Union forces were again repulsed with a loss that mounted to 16,000, General Lee decided upon an invasion of the North. Both victories had been won in Virginia. Lee now believed that by moving into Pennsylvania, capturing Harrisburg, threatening New York and cutting the northern communication with Washington, the Union could be split. It was a bold undertaking.

Moving the Confederate army of Virginia with 85,000 men across the Potomac and into Pennsylvania in the early summer of 1863, General Lee soon discovered that the Union forces were watchfully advancing on parallel roads. Misfortune had followed the Army of the Potomac and its generals since its organization. The failure of McClellan to follow up his successes at Antietam had resulted in his displacement; the rashness with which Burnside had assaulted Fredericksburg led to his removal, and now Hooker after the blow at Chancellorsville was taking a discouraged army northward while he was smarting under the criticisms that had come with defeat. Angered at the lack of cooperation on the way, Hooker resigned before another engagement. General George G. Meade was immediately placed in command.

As Lee proceeded northward he set his trap for a

battle at Cashtown, near Harrisburg. Meade was maneuvering for a battle at Pipe Creek. When Lee, nearing Harrisburg, late in June, learned that the pursuing army of the Potomac now threatened to sever his supply line from the south, he turned his forces in the direction of Washington. So it happened that the Confederate army came into Gettysburg from the north and the federal forces came up from the south. That neither general anticipated an engagement at this point is shown by the fact that neither Lee nor Meade was present on the first day of the fighting, July 1, 1863.

While that three days' battle was in progress, President Lincoln almost lived in the telegraph office at Washington. When Pickett's charge on the third day failed, Lincoln knew that Meade had won; that triumph had come to:

"The past of the Nation in battle there."

The toll on each side was appalling: 28,000 Confederates killed, wounded and missing; 23,000 Union killed, wounded and missing; with a total of 10,000 killed outright on both sides.

Following came the news from Grant that Vicksburg had fallen on July 4, and the Mississippi River was open. In high spirits, eight days later, Lincoln issued his second Thanksgiving day proclamation naming August 6 as a "day for national Thanksgiving, praise and prayer." Hopeful that Meade would crush Lee's retreating army before it could re-cross the Potomac, Lincoln anxiously waited.[1]

"They will be ready to fight a magnificent battle when there is no enemy there to fight," he declared impatiently as the days passed without further activity.

[1] Bates, *Ibid.*, p. 157.

Before the over-cautious Meade was ready for another attack, Lee, on July 12, crossed safely back into Virginia. The Confederate invasion of the North had failed. At last the rebel armies had been placed on the defensive.

"Where are all of these hills, ridges and round tops, one reads about in the story of the three-day engagement?" we asked the guide when we started our tour of the battleground and had a view of the field.

"They're here, but they are not at the elevation most visitors expect," he responded. "The battlefield is an undulating, but not an especially hilly country."

As we proceeded, the guide explained that $7,000,000 had been spent in beautifying the battlefield park, which now includes almost 25,000 acres. In it are fifty-seven miles of road which lead to every corner, and 1,296 monuments have been erected—some by regiments and others by states.[1]

"The cannon mouths that once belched death into the Union lines to make way for Pickett's famous charge have become a nesting place for birds," observed the guide. "Nearly four hundred pieces of artillery have been remounted on spots where once they stood in the fray. All of these replacements have been made since President Lincoln came to dedicate the ground."

The route of observation takes one through Gettysburg. At one corner of the public square still stands the gray painted, three-story Wills house, now used in part as a store. Its owner, David Wills, extended the invitation to Mr. Lincoln to dedicate the cemetery; it

[1] Bent, Myron H., *Historical Sketch of Gettysburg Cemetery,* reprinted in *Congressional Record,* Seventieth Congress, second session, Feb. 12, 1929, pp. 3492-3493.

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LINCOLN SPEECH MEMORIAL AT GETTYSBURG

was at his home that the President stayed during the visit, and here in the evening before the ceremonies Lincoln completed the writing of the address which, in the language of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "will not easily be surpassed by words on any recorded occasion."

The interest of Mr. Wills in inviting President Lincoln was natural. He wanted the occasion to be memorable. He had been appointed by Governor Andrew G. Curtin of Pennsylvania to care for the wounded after the battle, and see to the interments. Because most of the burials had been made in shallow graves he proposed that all Union bodies should be gathered in one cemetery and that this spot be dedicated. The plan was approved and the committee in charge invited Edward Everett, former Senator from Massachusetts, one of the most eloquent of American statesmen, to deliver the oration. The original date for the dedication was set for October 23, 1863, but because of Mr. Everett's inability to prepare in time, it was delayed until Thursday, November 19. Two weeks before the dedication Judge Wills conceived the idea of asking President Lincoln to attend and make "a few appropriate remarks." Lincoln accepted. Secretary of War Stanton was delegated to make the arrangements.

Accompanied by several members of his cabinet, the president left Washington at noon the day before the ceremonies, and traveling by way of Baltimore and Hanover Junction, arrived in Gettysburg early in the evening.[1] Judged by the rough facilities for traveling, and the number of people who met the President at every station, the stories that his address was written

[1] Starr, John W., Jr., *Lincoln and the Railroads,* pp. 246-264, gives details of the journey.

on a sheet of wrapping paper while en route appear fanciful and wholly improbable. For my own part, after extensive research, I have reached the conclusion that the first page of the address was prepared in Washington. The speech was completed in the evening after his arrival and during his stay at the Wills house. This is the version of his secretary, John G. Nicolay,[1] sustained, it seems to me, by competent evidence. During the morning before the exercises the whole text was recopied.

"On a horse too small for the height of its rider, Mr. Lincoln appeared in the procession that formed near noon on November 19, and moved to the cemetery," explained the official guide after a visit to the Wills house.

As we followed the route of march, our guide pointed out the house where Jennie Wade had been killed by a stray bullet while baking bread in her home on the morning of July 3, the last day of the engagement. She was the only civilian to die in the battle of Gettysburg. The old home has become a mecca for women who insist on seeing her kitchen before touring the grounds.

"It has been variously estimated that from 15,000 to 25,000 people came to the dedication," the guide continued. "Many of them were the fathers and mothers of boys who had been killed in the carnage. It was a sad meeting devoid of all holiday display."

Soon we were at the cemetery. The dead repose in circling rows. The markers to hundreds read "un-

[1] Nicolay, John G., *Century Magazine*, February, 1894, pp. 601-602. Facsimile of address in Lincoln's hand with letter from Robert T. Lincoln explaining its history, *Senate Document* 236, Sixty-sixth Congress, second session.

known." The Soldiers' Monument, raised by the United States government, stands at the center of the semi-circle. It lifts high its pinnacle. Surrounding it are evergreens and approaching it are much-trod paths. Appropriate, seemingly, is the scene for the place of eternal sleep.

"The rostrum where Mr. Lincoln delivered his address stood on almost the exact site of the federal memorial," our guide added, when again we came to attention at the base of the shaft. "The two-hour address of Mr. Everett, by its appropriateness, struck so popular a chord that a separate memorial has been raised for it at the end of the cemetery."

During the exercises Mr. Lincoln gave the closest attention to Mr. Everett's address. Without the use of notes, the orator of the day appraised in glowing language the gallantry of the troops and the glory of the victory. A careful memorizing of the address, a rehearsing of paragraphs for tone and gesture, made the presentation admirable. Toward the close Mr. Lincoln fidgeted in his seat, then took from the inside pocket of his Prince Albert coat a memorandum, which, when Mr. Everett concluded, he was still examining.

Coming to the front of the stage, after adjusting his old-fashioned spectacles, Mr. Lincoln paused for a moment as if wrapped in meditation. He stood in an attitude of silent prayer. Soon his voice rang out over the crowd, recalling the wanderers, who had strayed away during the preceding long address. Slowly he read the words from the manuscript, without gesture and with no pauses which would invite the audience to applaud. Once only he lifted his eyes as if appealing from the few thousands before him to the millions he

desired to reach. Before many had adjusted themselves for its reception, he had finished. They looked about in disappointment. Even at the close there was little applause.

"A cemetery was not the place for it and he did not pause to receive it," was the comment of Joseph L. Gilbert of Philadelphia, the Associated Press representative who gave Lincoln's message to the world. "No one of the many orators whom, in after years, I heard repeat the address ever made it sparkle with light and meaning as its great author did."

Within less than five minutes, in a speech of thirty type-set lines, Lincoln had made an address that for purity of simple diction, pathos, sentiment and appeal, ranks with the classics of the world. No less than four versions of it have been printed.[1] All are alike in text except for a few words and two sentences. Because of this controversy I copied the official words from the tablet erected close by the spot where they were uttered:

FOUR SCORE AND SEVEN YEARS AGO OUR FATHERS BROUGHT FORTH UPON THIS CONTINENT, A NEW NATION, CONCEIVED IN LIBERTY, AND DEDICATED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL.

NOW WE ARE ENGAGED IN A GREAT CIVIL WAR, TESTING WHETHER THAT NATION, OR ANY NATION SO CONCEIVED, AND SO DEDICATED, CAN LONG ENDURE. WE ARE MET ON A GREAT BATTLE-FIELD OF THAT WAR. WE HAVE COME TO DEDICATE A PORTION OF THAT FIELD, AS A FINAL RESTING PLACE FOR THOSE WHO HERE GAVE THEIR LIVES, THAT THAT NATION MIGHT LIVE. IT IS ALTOGETHER FITTING AND PROPER THAT WE SHOULD DO THIS.

BUT, IN A LARGER SENSE, WE CAN NOT DEDICATE —WE CAN NOT CONSECRATE—WE CAN NOT HALLOW —THIS GROUND. THE BRAVE MEN, LIVING AND DEAD, WHO STRUGGLED HERE, HAVE CONSECRATED

[1] Barton, William E., *Ibid.* 174-226.

IT, FAR ABOVE OUR POOR POWER TO ADD OR DETRACT. THE WORLD WILL LITTLE NOTE, NOR LONG REMEMBER, WHAT WE SAY HERE, BUT IT CAN NEVER FORGET WHAT THEY DID HERE. IT IS FOR US, THE LIVING, RATHER, TO BE DEDICATED HERE TO THE UNFINISHED WORK WHICH THEY WHO FOUGHT HERE, HAVE, THUS FAR, SO NOBLY ADVANCED. IT IS RATHER FOR US TO BE HERE DEDICATED TO THE GREAT TASK REMAINING BEFORE US—THAT FROM THESE HONORED DEAD WE TAKE INCREASED DEVOTION TO THAT CAUSE FOR WHICH THEY HERE GAVE THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION—THAT WE HERE HIGHLY RESOLVE THAT THESE DEAD SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN—THAT THIS NATION, UNDER GOD, SHALL HAVE A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM—AND THAT, GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE, SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.

When I had completed the copying I turned to dismiss the guide and asked for road directions to Washington.

"Don't you want to see all of the places connected with Mr. Lincoln's visit here?" he interrupted.

"Certainly! I thought this was all."

"People of Gettysburg are almost as fond of another scene connected with Mr. Lincoln's visit," the guide continued. "John Burns,[1] the five-foot cobbler of Gettysburg, whose life-sized statue you saw on the field, now enters into Mr. Lincoln's visit. During the battle the shoemaker, a civilian past seventy, entered on the side of the Union forces, with his old flint-lock musket. When his ammunition was exhausted he was given the gun of a wounded soldier from the Seventh Wisconsin, with which he fought until he himself carried three bullets.

"So raged the battle. You know the rest:
How the rebels, beaten and backward pressed,

[1] *The Lincoln and Burns Event,* pamphlet, issued by John White Johnson, Rochester, N. Y., and the Presbyterian Church, Gettysburg, Pa.

Broke at the final charge and ran.
At which John Burns—a practical man—
Shouldered his rifle, unbent his brows,
And then went back to his bees and cows."[1]

"After President Lincoln's address, in company with John Burns, a citizen of honor then, followed by a number of officials from Washington, they walked back to the city to attend a service arranged in the Presbyterian Church. The tall President kept the short-legged cobbler trotting to keep up with him on the way. The service was brief but so memorable that both the church and the pew in which Mr. Lincoln and John Burns sat have become significant landmarks in Gettysburg."

On the fifty-first anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, commemorative exercises were held in the edifice and two Lincoln tablets were unveiled, one on the church front and the other within. The door was open and we entered to find the Lincoln pew, flag-draped, as though reserved for his return.

That night after a hasty reception at the Wills home, feeling ill and disappointed with his own speech, President Lincoln, with his official party, returned to Washington. Late in the evening he arrived at the White House.

"The speech is a flat failure and the people are disappointed," Lincoln told his old friend, Ward Hill Lamon.[2] He felt he should have prepared a longer address and with greater care.

Little did he realize that one single sentence—"Gov-

[1] Harte, Bret (Poetical Works) "John Burns of Gettysburg."
[2] Lamon, Ward Hill, *Recollections*, p. 170.

STATUE OF JOHN BURNS

ernment of the people, by the people and for the people"—would soon rank with the world's most familiar quotations and the speech itself take its place as a pillar in the Decalogue of Americanism beside the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

CHAPTER XXII

IN LINCOLN'S VACATION HAUNTS

THE valley of the James in eastern Virginia is one of America's richest historical legacies. The beauty of its scenery only paints the setting for the mysteries of its romantic charm. Upon its highlands reposes the dust of courageous adventurers who came to settle a continental wilderness. Along the banks of its upper branches President Lincoln sought rest from office worries in the only vacation he was ever to have.

For two weeks in 1865, immediately before the assassination, the President was the guest of General Grant at his City Point headquarters near the junction of the Appomattox and the James rivers. While there he saw the Confederacy crumple in ruin; visited the deserted capitol at Richmond and then hastened his return to Washington to direct the reunion of the states and their destinies.

Roads followed by troops, lines of entrenchment and battlegrounds which Lincoln saw are still landmarks, for earth scars do not readily disappear. The blood of states has made them imperishable. President Lincoln came upon the nearby Richmond scenes after nearly a day-and-a-half water trip down the Potomac and up the James river. We reached the places where once he trod, after an automobile trip of four hours, that left us dizzy in our attempts to read the signs marking battlegrounds and sites.

Virginia is proud of her history. Every impor-

tant engagement, every significant military movement within her borders in both the Revolutionary and Civil wars has been tableted. Those who drive slowly read on the spot of stirring times in American history. The past is marshaled for panoramic review.

"Washington drove Cornwallis toward a surrender at Yorktown along this road," reads one. "From this spot Lee turned north after the battle of Chancellorsville," another reminded us. "This was Grant's line of advance upon Petersburg," says a third, and a fourth announces that while at City Point in the spring of 1865, "General Grant was visited by President Lincoln."

I admit there was a temptation momentarily to forget the vacation haunts of President Lincoln for a detour to some of these other places. Every byway beckons with an invitation promising romantic excursions into a glorious past. Perhaps a like allurement came to Lincoln as the "River Queen" carried him past inland Williamsburg, the site of the first government in Virginia; up the historic James river, misty with the dreams of Captain John Smith, whose deserted colony site at Jamestown is now watched over by the statue of Pocahontas; to the Appomattox manor of the Eppes family from which General Grant[1] directed his final strategic moves.

Journeying leisurely up the river, over waters yellow with the clay of the country it traverses, Lincoln must have found time to muse over the dark days that had shadowed his administration since his trip in the fall of 1863 to Gettysburg. Events were swift in passing. In March, 1864, following his successes in the West,

[1] Pryor, Mrs. Roger A., *Reminiscences of Peace and War*, pp. 136-137.

Grant had been called by Lincoln to the East and placed in charge of the armies of the United States, with the rank of lieutenant-general. During May the new commander joined Meade and advanced upon Lee, whose Confederate forces lay between them and Richmond. Sixteen days of battles in the wilderness—a section of undergrowth south of Fredericksburg and the Rappahannock to the York river—resulted in a repulse at Cold Harbor, on the 2nd day of June. Grant then moved his forces across the James river, established his headquarters at City Point, and settled down to a nine months' siege.

Meantime the war had been thrown into the political balance. A national election was pending. Party lines that were broken in the fall of 1860 were now sundered beyond recognition. The convention which re-nominated Lincoln at Baltimore on June 17, 1864, was made up of all factions favoring a maintenance of the Union. The Democrats, meeting at Chicago on August 29, named General George B. McClellan and denounced the war as "four years of failure"—a plank which the party nominee promptly repudiated.

Through the early fall opposition to the re-election of the President was bitter. Mass meetings were held in some sections of the North to censure the administration. As the wave mounted Lincoln grew more haggard, careworn, and even despaired of success. On August 23 he prepared a memorandum, which he asked each member of the cabinet to endorse without reading it, and then filed it away. It was their pledge to help the President-elect to "save the Union between the election and the inauguration, as he will have secured

his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterward." [1]

As election day neared, the tide of criticism subsided. Such was the feeling for the Union that in the November vote Lincoln carried every state participating, except New Jersey, Delaware and Kentucky. The victory was tremendous in its moral aspects. It gave the country courage; it was notice to foreign governments that the people sustained the Union cause.

"If I know my heart, my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph," was the President's response from the White House upper windows to a crowd that came to serenade him at 2 o'clock in the morning after learning the outcome.[2] "I do not impugn the motives of anyone, but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity."

At once the political atmosphere cleared like a day of sunshine following rain. The cartoonists had their fling at picturing a slender man of outlandish height, under the title "Long Abraham a Little Longer." Grant wired that the results of the election were worth more than a victory in battle.

On March 4, after a morning spent in the President's office at the Capitol signing bills, Mr. Lincoln appeared before a large crowd gathered before the east portico again to see him take the oath. A rift in a cloudy day showered the scene with brilliant light as he came forward to speak. Judge Douglas, who had held the President's hat four years before, was dead, but Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, a thorn early in

[1] Nicolay, Helen, *Personal Portraits of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 305.
[2] Brooks, Noah, *Washington in Lincoln's Time*, pp. 218-617.

the administration because of his own presidential aspirations, while a member of the cabinet, held the Bible for Lincoln to kiss after administering the oath. Strange roles were these for political opponents to play!

The short address delivered on the occasion ranks as one of the three notable pieces of literature from Mr. Lincoln's pen. The speech at Cooper Union has been selected for its style of argument; the words at Gettysburg for pathos; and the second inaugural for simple language clothing noble sentiments. In this respect it overshadows all others.

"Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray," said President Lincoln in concluding, "that this mighty scourge of war will speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so must it be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Almost a month before this message, President Lincoln had aided in a futile effort to end the strife. To more than one friend he admitted that the war was killing him. Joining with Secretary Seward, he met the three commissioners of the Confederacy in the cabin of

the President's steamer, the "River Queen," at Hampton Roads on February 3, 1865.

"There is the smallest nubbin I ever saw come out of so much husk," observed Lincoln, humorously, as his old friend in Congress, Alexander H. Stephens, now a Confederate official, removed his great coat and muffler and emerged for the meeting.[1] The session did not last long. Lincoln insisted on a restoration of national authority throughout all of the states and would permit no recession from his position taken on the slavery issue. The Confederates refused to accede and next day the disappointed President returned to Washington.

Already the military plans for the spring campaign were shaping. Within less than three weeks after the inauguration President Lincoln received an invitation from General Grant asking him to visit City Point.

"I think the rest will do you good," urged the General in his telegram. The President accepted promptly, and on March 24 arrived at the headquarters. A few days later Mrs. Lincoln came. It proved to be his last trip outside of Washington.

"I wanted to get away from office-seekers for a while, so I came," Lincoln remarked as he greeted the General, who met him on the busy wharf. Together they climbed the high embankment to the headquarters.

Three score years have transformed City Point, the center for the two weeks' vacationing of President Lincoln. Hopewell, the magic-built city of paper houses and war munition plants of the World War, is absorbing City Point, turning many of the acres of the old Eppes plantation into streets and building lots. Gone are the sixty little shacks erected by the Union army

1 Pendelton, *Alexander H. Stephens*, p. 332; Bates, Homer, *Ibid.*, p. 322-342.

around Appomattox Manor for use as hospitals. Even the shabby headquarters-cabin, where General Grant spent so many hours in conference with the President, has been removed. It may still be seen, however, in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, overlooking the Schuylkill river, the American flag ever flying before its door.

Notches in the window framework of the rambling white manor house [1] show passage for telegraph wires used by General Grant in directing the Union army. Over these lines President Lincoln sent many of his messages to Washington advising of the progress of the campaign, which resulted in the fall of Richmond. Much of the colonial beauty is retained. Melodious sounds of Southern plantation life can yet be heard. Colored people, early descendants of slaves brought there two centuries before, still care for the historic acres. There are orchards and gardens of flowers. Clumps of evergreen shade the walks, and arbored pathways lead to the river where the President's steamer was docked.

On one of the daily walks, the President and Mrs. Lincoln came upon a secluded cemetery in the immediate vicinity. Being tired they entered to rest. The quiet of the place stole over them.

"I wish we might be buried in such a restful spot," remarked Mr. Lincoln as they arose to return.

The interest of the President in historical places manifested itself when cares fell away. At his suggestion one afternoon was given over to an excursion to Point of Rocks, a place on the Appomattox river,

[1] Sale, Edith T., Editor, *Historic Gardens of Virginia,* pp. 54-60; published contributions and pictures by Laura C. Martin Wheelwright, giving full history of Appomattox Manor.

twenty miles east of Richmond, where Captain John Smith is said to have visited the Indian princess, Pocahontas.[1]

Not alone for a vacation had Mr. Lincoln gone to City Point. He desired to see that good care was being given to the soldiers in hospitals and to review the troops. Every sick ward was visited by him, including the beds of the rebels.

"I am mighty tired from handshaking," declared the President as he returned to the office of the hospital superintendent.

"Well, you saw them all, except one group of rebels," declared the guard who had gone through with him.

"What? Did we miss some of the boys? If they are rebels it is all the more reason I should visit them. Take me to them!"

Soon after his arrival military operations became so active that he was compelled to keep well behind the lines with General Grant. They rode through the camps in the morning; some of his afternoons were spent with General Porter on his flagship "Malvern" sailing up and down the river. It was soon after his coming, on March 27, 1865, that a memorable meeting was held, attended by General William T. Sherman, who had just completed his march to the sea, by General Grant and by Admiral Porter, on board the "River Queen."[2] A canvass depicting this famous gathering, painted by G. P. A. Healy, hangs in the rooms of the Chicago Historical Society. It was the last council of

[1] Starr, John W., Jr., *Ibid.*, p. 240.

[2] Coffin, Charles C., *Reminiscences of Lincoln*, edited by Allen T. Rice, pp. 178-184; Sherman, W. T., *Personal Memoirs*, Vol. II, pp. 322-334; Grant, U. S., *Personal Memoirs*, Vol. II, pp. 436-453; Porter, Horace, *Century Magazine*, "Lincoln," October, 1885, Vol. 32, p. 749.

war. Both Grant and Sherman felt that one more battle must be fought before the end.

"No more bloodshed! No more bloodshed!" Lincoln pleaded again and again in the course of the interview. "Is there no way that another battle may be avoided and the war won?"

Within a few hours the final siege was begun. The road from Hopewell to Petersburg passes, in ten miles, trenches and embrasures so often visited by Lincoln within the next few days. The bullet-pocked houses of Petersburg still remind one of the fury of the conflict. Grant began his forward movement on March 31. Lincoln remained in the telegraph office at City Point and sent the news to Washington, on April 3, that Petersburg had fallen. A few hours later, at Grant's request, he came to Petersburg, and on the porch of an old house, still standing, held the last conference they were to have before Lee surrendered his sword.

"I want to see Richmond at once," was the exclamation of the President when news came over the wire that the Confederate troops had evacuated Richmond. A party was arranged starting up the River James on April 4, arriving there early in the afternoon. It was his first and only visit to the historic city.

Richmond did not learn of his coming. Accompanied by Admiral Porter and several officers, and escorted by ten sailors, President Lincoln, holding the hand of his little son Tad, walked through streets of smoldering waste in search of the Confederate "White House." He gave no heed to Stanton's advice to go only if amply protected. There General Weitzell had opened his headquarters. Two days were spent in conference at Richmond with Southern leaders. He

visited the capitol, and other scenes of interest during the war.

If the citizens of Richmond did not herald the coming of the President, the negroes did. They crowded his way and made it almost impossible for him to proceed.[1]

"Bress de Lord!" they shouted as they knelt at his feet. "Dere is the Great Messiah. Glory Hallelujah!"

"Don't kneel to me," implored Lincoln, embarrassed by their intrusions upon his path. "That is not right. You must kneel to God only and thank Him for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy."

Following in the trail of President Lincoln we visited the Confederate "White House" to find that the building had been turned into a museum in which each of the Southern states now maintains a war exhibit. The imposing structure of colonial design stands on a corner one block off the Capitol Square. We were asked to hang our wraps on the hall-rack, used by Jefferson Davis while he occupied the mansion. The scent of things that are musty and old permeates the high-ceilinged rooms.

"President Lincoln spent most of his time in the room now reserved for the state of Georgia," commented the attendant. "During the services at St. Paul's Church on Sunday, April 2, Mr. Davis received word from General Lee that Richmond must be evacuated. Plans were made at once for the withdrawal of troops. Libby prison doors were opened. To prevent the stores of tobacco falling into the hands of the Union

[1] Avary, Myrta Lockett, *Dixie After The War*, pp. 29-43; Porter, *Incidents and Anecdotes of the Civil War*, pp. 295-302; Pryor, *Ibid.*, p. 358.

troops the torch was applied to the warehouses. Fire destroyed a large part of the city.

"When President Lincoln arrived at the mansion he was worn and tired. Seeing a comfortable chair at a large desk, he took it. It was the very desk and chair used by Mr. Davis throughout the war and deserted but a few hours before. Within this room President Lincoln met leaders from Richmond and talked over plans for the return of Virginia to the Union of states. Had he lived it is not likely that this building would ever have been used as the district headquarters for the five years of military rule."

One block nearer, on a hill that overlooks the city and the James river, is the present capitol of Virginia. The building, its broad white-pillared entrance, its terraces, walks and historic statues, are of noble planning. The central portion was the capitol of the Confederacy. Two wings have since been added. Designed by Thomas Jefferson, who was impressed by the simple style of Greek architecture, the structure today is one of the most dignified of state houses in the Southland. In its rotunda stands Houdon's famous statue of Washington, enthusiastically approved by the sage of Mount Vernon, eleven years before his death. Lincoln could not have escaped a view of this likeness. If it pleased him as it has thrilled others he must have felt more than satisfied with his inspection tour.

To the rear is the old assembly hall of the Confederate Congress. The same room was used by Justice John Marshall, a resident of Richmond, at the trial of Aaron Burr for treason.

"Did Lincoln see these rooms?" I asked the guide.

"I reckon he did. He had meetings with officials

"THE PEACE MAKERS"
By G. P. A. Healy, Chicago Historical Society

here. During two days he went to many places connected with the war, including Libby prison."

"Is the prison still standing?" interrupted my eager companion, anxious for another place to visit.

"That building was moved away over thirty years ago and taken to the World's Fair at Chicago. An ice plant has since been erected on the site."

During two afternoons the President and his family rode about the city. Whether they saw St. John's Church, where Patrick Henry delivered his "liberty and death" speech, or the substantial red brick residence of Chief Marshall, we are not informed. That a lawyer should pass unobserved such milestones of the profession seems, however, unlikely. From behind curtained windows women viewed him in silence. He met with no opposition. Although given the way there was no exultation in Lincoln's bearing.

"I never saw a sadder, wearier face than Lincoln's," declared an onlooker. "It may be that the scene of smoking ruins, together with the remembrances of the terrible losses of human life, chilled any enthusiasm that came from victory."

At the end of his mission he returned to City Point. His temporary desk was loaded with telegrams. He had intended to stay a few days longer and would probably have gone to Appomattox for Lee's surrender had he not received a message that Secretary Seward had been thrown from his horse and injured.

"We must return to Washington at once," announced the President on reading the telegram.

On the afternoon of April 9, as the "River Queen" steamed up the Potomac near the Capitol, the Mar-

quis de Chambrun [1] commented on the reposeful beauty of Mount Vernon, the old home of Washington, which the boat was then passing. Lincoln was gazing at the hillsides flushed to green. On the crest, embowered in budding trees, stood the long white residence.

"Mount Vernon and Springfield, the memories of Washington and your own, those of the Revolutionary and Civil wars; these are the spots and names America shall one day equally honor," declared the Marquis, addressing the President. The statement broke his dreamings.

"Springfield!" repeated the President, drawing himself up. "How happy, four years hence, will I be to return there in peace and tranquillity."

Shortly after Lincoln's return to the White House word was received from General Grant that Lee had surrendered, on April 9, at Appomattox. When the city awoke, after four years of war, to the significance of this announcement a large crowd gathered on the White House lawn, Tuesday evening, April 11, to serenade the President.

"A call for a national thanksgiving is being prepared and will soon be promulgated," he responded after many calls. He spoke from an open upper window above the colonial entrance.

"I, myself, was near the front and had the high pleasure of transmitting much of the good news to you; but no part of the honor for plan or execution is mine."

Pausing a moment he turned toward the band.

"The band is here," continued the President slowly.

[1] Chambrun, The Marquis de, "Personal Recollections of Mr. Lincoln," *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. 13, January, 1893, p. 34; Whipple, *The Story Life of Lincoln*, p. 632.

"I have always thought 'Dixie' one of the best tunes I ever heard. I insisted yesterday we had fairly captured it. I presented the question to the attorney general and he gave the opinion that it was our lawful prize. I have not heard the old tune for four years.

"Now, let the band play 'Dixie'!"

CHAPTER XXIII

WHERE LINCOLN DIED

ABRAHAM LINCOLN died in a narrow, two-windowed, little room on Tenth Street in Washington that was almost as humble as the Kentucky cabin that witnessed his birth. The four-story structure of brick veneer is worn and shabby within. The hallways are dark, the doors fit into uneven casements, the stairs creak with age under feet. Except for a three-foot extension to the rear of the room at the end of the first floor hall, where the soul of the martyr took flight, few changes have been made. Its three lower rooms house the world's largest curiosity shop of mementoes associated with Mr. Lincoln.

A child whom the President had held on his knees but a few weeks before was stirred by the grieved conversation of a father and mother who had just returned from Ford's Theatre. He is now the government custodian of these hallowed precincts: this man, Lewis Gardner Reynolds, took us through the rooms.

"Father and mother were at Ford's Theatre the night of the assassination," he repeated in low tones when we stood at the threshold of the death chamber. "Although it was late when they returned home, the excitement of the night had already reached our boarding house. I, too, was awake. Young as I was, I realized what a dreadful thing had happened, and I lay wide-eyed in my little trundle bed while father and mother related to the others their personal story of the tragedy."

It was Good Friday, April 14, 1865—four years after the flag had been lowered on Fort Sumter. The President had risen early and the family breakfast was a happy reunion. Robert, the President's oldest son, an aide-de-camp on Grant's staff, had arrived that morning from the closing scenes of the Richmond campaign.

Outside the sky was clear, the air sweet as only spring rains could wash it. The whole city, gay with flags, had not recovered from three days of holiday rejoicing. The war was at an end. The soldiers clamored to return home. General Grant had arrived in the city the day before to hasten the work of demobilizing the army.[1]

Mrs. Lincoln, always fond of social affairs, had accepted an invitation to make up a party to attend a benefit performance at which Miss Laura Keene was to present *Our American Cousin.* She had invited as guests General and Mrs. Grant and they had tentatively accepted. The papers that morning carried the announcement and people rushed to Ford's Theatre for tickets, anxious for the opportunity to see the military hero, whose face was then little known to Washington.

President Lincoln meddled little in social arrangements. He was too happy over the outcome of the war; too eager to place the huge war machinery in reverse gear; too busy with plans to return the nation to peace. The regular cabinet meeting, which had been called for 9 o'clock, had been delayed until 11 o'clock. General Grant was to attend.

It was difficult for the members to get down to business. Every one wanted a word with the General. They plied him with questions as to the terms of release he had made for the Confederate soldiers. They

[1] Starr, John W., Jr., *Lincoln's Last Day,* p. 87.

wanted to know if General Sherman's movements were likely to be successful. Suddenly into its deliberations crept a note of strange mysticism. President Lincoln had to tell the story of a dream the night before.

"Something extraordinary is going to happen and that very soon," the President began.

"Something very good, sir, I hope," observed Attorney General Speed, who, looking up, noticed as he turned toward Lincoln a favorable personal change in the President's appearance. His clothes were well brushed, his face was clean-shaven and his hair neatly combed.[1]

"I don't know—I don't know, but it will happen shortly. Three times I have had the same dream. Once before Bull Run, again before Gettysburg, and then last night. I was in a boat on a great, broad, rolling river. I drift and I drift. It must relate to Sherman. My thoughts were in that direction and I know of no other very important event which is likely to occur."

Then, lifting his head, the President changed his attitude.

"But this is not business," he apologetically remarked, as he saw Secretary Stanton enter. "Let us proceed to our work, gentlemen."

One hour later the last gathering of Lincoln's official family had adjourned.

"That is the most satisfactory cabinet meeting I have attended in many a day," remarked Secretary Stanton, as he walked down the White House stairs in company

[1] Charles Dickens, then on second tour of America, was the first to write of this presentiment in a letter to England. Barrett, Joseph H., *Abraham Lincoln and his Presidency,* Vol. 2, p. 355; Whipple, *Ibid.,* p. 642; Tarbell, *Ibid.,* Vol. 2, pp. 230-235.

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FORD'S THEATRE

with Attorney General Speed. "The President appeared happier than in a long time."

"We all remarked on this extraordinary change in his appearance before you arrived," rejoined his companion.

Late in the afternoon a carriage rolled up to the White House steps and the President and Mrs. Lincoln went for a drive. Their talk drifted to their old home at Springfield.

"Mary," exclaimed the President, "we have had a hard time since we came to Washington! Now the war is over. We have saved a little money and in four years we will have saved more—but not enough to keep us. We will go back to Illinois and I will open a law office at Springfield or Chicago. I shall at least be able to earn enough to give us a livelihood."

The presidential pair returned at dusk, to find Richard Oglesby and a group of Illinois friends just leaving the White House.

"Come back, boys, come back," the President shouted, and took them upstairs to his office. In the midst of his reading of a humorous story he was called away to dinner. That evening the Lincoln family dined alone.

Meantime the Grants had sent their regrets announcing that they had decided to proceed to Burlington, New Jersey, that night to visit their daughter, Nellie, in school there. At Mrs. Lincoln's invitation, Major H. R. Rathbone, and his fiancée, the daughter of Senator Ira Harris, New York, took their places as guests at the theatre.[1]

[1] Bates, *Ibid.*, p. 368; Brooks, *Washington*, pp. 257-258.

"I do not care to go now," the President told his wife. "It has been advertised that we will be there and I cannot disappoint the people. Otherwise I would not go."

There were many delays before the President was ready to leave. Business matters must be given attention. To Mr. Ashmun, the presiding officer of the convention that had nominated Lincoln at Chicago, he gave a card which would admit him the following morning at 9 o'clock. To another he gave a note stating that no pass was longer needed for one to go to Richmond.

When the President's carriage arrived, the first act was half over. The Lincolns picked their way back of the dress circles down a corridor into the box, where a large rocking-chair awaited the President. Close by sat Mrs. Lincoln. A little to the rear on a divan were the reservations for Major Rathbone and Miss Harris.[1] Outside stood a throng of citizens, unable to gain admission.

Ford's Theatre is now a government warehouse. We came upon it, late in the evening, at about the hour of night the President had been shot. The doors were locked and bolted. By the glare of the street light we could see that the space within was piled high with boxes. No trace of the interior of the theatre remains. A bronze tablet, near the entrance through which the President entered, read:

[1] Major Rathbone was the father of the late Congressman Henry R. Rathbone of Illinois, who became active in having the house where Lincoln died preserved as a memorial. *Congressional Record,* Jan. 21, 1929, Vol. 70, pp. 2047-2049.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WAS ASSASSINATED
IN THIS BUILDING, APRIL 14, 1865
FORD THEATRE 1863-1865
NOW OWNED AND OCCUPIED BY
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

Somehow the building seemed distinctly old. Four of the entrance arches have been closed. The front is an unornamented surface of dark gray brick, broken by many window spaces. From them no light of welcome gleamed. I rattled the door, but no attendant responded. All was quiet in the neighborhood, except at an oil station on the corner.

"The President's box was on the right side," explained my companion, thoroughly conversant with the scene. "After buying a drink of liquor in a nearby saloon, John Wilkes Booth, an actor, slipped around back of the dress circle, and stealthily blocked the door to the President's box. No one knew of his presence until a pistol shot rang out and the President's head fell forward. The audience was momentarily stunned. Brandishing a dagger, with which he stabbed Major Rathbone in a scuffle, the assassin vaulted the box, caught his heel in the silk flag drapery, and shouting defiance from the stage escaped to an alley at the rear. The scream of the President's wife and the quick plea of Miss Harris for water so distracted attention that Booth was able to get away." [1]

Mrs. Abraham Lincoln told Dr. Miller of Springfield in after years that when the fatal bullet struck the President he was talking about a journey to Palestine for rest after they should leave the White House. He

[1] John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's assassin, was killed by pursuing federal troops on Garrett's farm, south of Port Royal, Va., on April 26, twelve days after he fled from Ford's Theatre.

wanted to see Jerusalem and place his feet in the very paths the Savior trod.[1]

Walking around the corner, we groped our way down the unlighted alley close walled by buildings, to a larger opening at the deserted theatre's back door. There an accomplice had held the horse upon which Booth evaded his tardy pursuers. The cobblestone way is rough and the horse's steel shoes must have resounded in echoes in this narrow chasm before the highway was reached.

"The place has altered very little in appearance since that day," observed my friend as we returned to the sidewalk.

Again approaching the theatre entrance, we saw someone cross the street and mount the curving, iron-railed steps, above the basement to the first floor of the old Petersen house, where President Lincoln was carried after he had been shot. A light flashed in the window, but was quickly extinguished. I followed, thinking all the way of William T. Clark, a Massachusetts soldier-boy, who, not knowing that it was the President, offered his humble bed that some injured man might be given care.

"Take my cot," volunteered Clark, opening the door. "It's in the back room."

Two men carried a bleeding form up the steps. The crowd tried to follow, but was held back.

"It's the President! He has been shot!" shouted someone to Clark, who held wide the door.

"What is your name?" inquired a reporter.

"I don't want my name mentioned. I don't want the

[1] *Wisconsin State Journal,* Madison, Wis., January 10, 1883, contains item in its column of "Personalities."

notoriety," replied Clark, turning away and mingling with the crowd.[1]

When I reached the steps the thought occurred to me that no time could be more appropriate to visit the rooms where the President had died. In my mind I had already pictured the dark night, the dingy little room, the President moaning as he lay on a cheap, low, four-poster, walnut bed, under the sickly light of a gas jet. No answer came from my insistent ringing of the bell. Turning to leave I read in the shadows the memorial:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
DIED IN THIS HOUSE
APRIL 15, 1865, AT 7:22 A. M.
PURCHASED BY THE
UNITED STATES IN 1896.

516 TENTH STREET N. W.

Visions of the old building, with gruesome scenes from the greatest tragedy the nation ever saw, morbidly danced before my eyes when I sought rest. I spent an anxious night awaiting the hour when the door would be opened in the morning. Never before had it occurred to me that the fates which gave Lincoln birth in a lowly log cabin should write the close in the humblest of rooms in a common boarding house—six blocks from all the comforts of the White House.

We met the custodian next morning in the front room where Mrs. Lincoln had spent that night of agony —awaiting the inevitable. From the doorway above the basement there rises a staircase, and beside it a long hall leads by two rooms to another in the rear where the President died. Back of the front room, where

[1] Oldroyd, O. H., *Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 37; Shackleton, Robert, *The Book of Washington*, pp. 149-151.

gathered the immediate family, was the one used that night by Secretary Stanton in directing the campaign for the capture of the assassin, in preparing public bulletins, and for the preliminary examination of witnesses to the tragedy.[1] These rooms now house the famous Oldroyd collection.

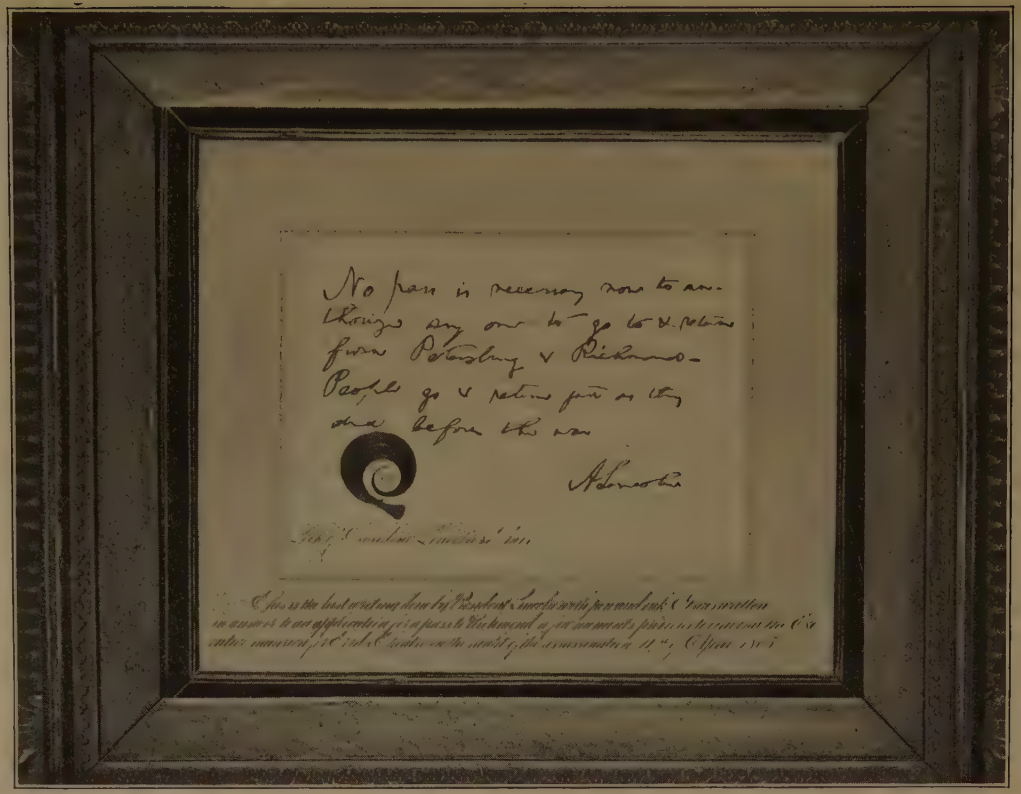
"This Lincolniana is one of the largest in existence and some say the greatest collection of relics ever associated with the life of one man," declared Mr. Reynolds, the custodian. "The clothes he wore, the Bible from which his mother read, the furniture he used and hundreds of his letters and photographs are here."

Even as a boy before the Civil War, Osborn H. Oldroyd began the gathering of Lincoln mementoes. A paper-covered pamphlet of the life of Lincoln printed in 1860 was the first. A rail split by Lincoln as a boy, the cradle in which the Lincoln children were rocked, the chair from his Springfield office, the stove on which his last meal was cooked at his home in Illinois, have all been assembled. To examine each article of interest; to read the legends on each picture would take more time than a casual visit would allow.[2]

Some of these mementoes were gathered by great diligence. Fourteen years were spent by Mr. Oldroyd before he obtained two of the most valuable relics. One was a lock of hair owned by a man who was an usher at the White House at the time of Lincoln's death. The other was probably the last message in ink,

[1] James, Tanner, last survivor of the historic scene, was stenographer at the official investigation. Letter in *American Historical Review,* Vol. XXIX, pp. 515-517. Barton, William E., *Ibid.,* Vol. II, pp. 469-485.

[2] Ulm, Aaron Hardy, *In The House Where Lincoln Died,* pamphlet reprinted from the *Dearborn Independent,* Feb. 11, 1922, gives an interesting survey of the mementoes.


No pass is necessary now to any
thing any one to go to Richmond
from Petersburg or Richmond
People go & return just as they
did before the war
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN'S LAST PEN-AND-INK NOTE

written by the President on a White House card just before he went to the theatre:

"No pass is necessary now to authorize any one to go to and return from Petersburg and Richmond. People go and return just as they did before the war.

"A. Lincoln."

"Mr. Oldroyd has just arrived," announced Mr. Reynolds after we had made a hasty survey of the rooms. "Maybe you would like to ask him some questions."

No man living has a more intimate knowledge of Mr. Lincoln than this veteran of the Civil War, Osborn H. Oldroyd, who has spent the years of an active lifetime gathering a memorial of things that visualize every step in Mr. Lincoln's career.

"These articles are a lesson to all ages," observed the gleaner, surveying the cases of mementoes as if summoning the ambitions of his life for review. "They prove that the hero was a human being and not a copper-plate image, which idealized persons long dead tend to become in the average mind."

Together we returned to the room where official Washington had gathered during those dark hours before the dawn.

"The room is seventeen feet long and nine feet wide," continued Mr. Oldroyd. "When Mr. Lincoln was brought here, on the walls hung a photograph taken from a lithograph of Rosa Bonheur's 'Horse Fair,' an engraved copy of Herring's 'Village Blacksmith' and two small ones of 'The Stable' and 'Barn Yard' by the

same artist. The room was lighted by a gas jet. The chamber is very much as it was at the time of Mr. Lincoln's death."

On the walls today is the same paper, now soiled, blanched and broken; its patterns and designs have lost their brilliancy of colors. The same doors swing on hinges; the same wide pine boards constitute the floor. A framed copy of the letter written to a sister in Boston, April 19, 1865, by the soldier-boy who gave up his room and bed for the dying President adorns the wall. From it I copied two sentences.

"Everybody has a great desire to obtain some memento from my room, so that whoever comes in has to be closely watched for fear he will steal something," he wrote. "The same mattress is on my bed, and the same coverlid covers me nightly that covered him while dying."

Near the center at one side of the room, the yellowing picture of the "Village Blacksmith" is still suspended. Even in mid-day the room is dark and musty. The place seems cramped, so much so it is a wonder that so many people found room at the dying Lincoln's bedside, bringing noise with their every movement and shutting out the air. The entire setting emphasizes the scantiness of comforts he had in his last hours.

At the head of the bed near the door stood doctors watching each move and every pulse beat; other officials found standing-room close to the walls; beside the unconscious man, a wife and mother in agony moaned out her grief.

With words of comfort Dr. Gurley, the President's pastor, prayed. To the watchers the night seemed so

long. When at last the light of life in the dying President flickered a moment and then went out, Secretary Stanton, touched with the deepest feeling, uttered in this room those unforgettable words:

"Now he belongs to the ages."

CHAPTER XXIV

THE WORLD'S GREATEST FUNERAL

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was accorded by the people of the land the world's greatest funeral. In the twelve days' journey back to Springfield, the sorrow became more poignant each day as the sable train moved westward. Baltimore, which had threatened him when he came to Washington four years before, now bowed and penitent, pressed in grief past his bier. But this was only a shadow of the bewilderment and despair which were to be witnessed.

Others beloved by the world have been signally honored in death. The military brilliancy of the return of Napoleon's body to the Hotel des Invalides would outrival it in the extraordinary pomp and trappings of official display; the burial of Queen Victoria might surpass it by the touching imagery of colorful ceremonials, but none could approach it in the besetting sadness of the multitudes gathered at each stopping place, or lining the tracks as the train sped along on its return of 1,662 miles that ended at the old Alton Station [1] in Springfield on May 3, 1865. More than one million people gazed upon his silent features; probably seven million participated in the funeral's march. Those who came from morbid curiosity caught the infectious heartbreak of the crowd and were themselves carried away with the grief of the sorrowing. No ora-

[1] The old station stood on the same site as the present one, Third and Washington Streets.

tor could dispel the gloom; no clergyman's solace could lull the people in their bereavement. They crowded by his casket with a prayer on their lips and homage in their hearts. Him they had understood; he was their own.

Two hours after his death in the house on Tenth Street, Washington, the body wrapped in a United States flag was borne through hushed streets and scenes of draped mourning to the Executive Mansion. Surrounded by floral tributes the wooden coffin was placed on a dais in the East Room and late in the afternoon of Saturday, April 15, the State Department issued a proclamation that the official funeral would be held on Wednesday noon, when—

"The various religious denominations throughout the country are invited to meet in their respective places of worship at the time, for the purpose of solemnizing the occasion by appropriate ceremonies."

Meantime the stunning blow struck the country. Business was suspended. Men quit their tasks without order to wander about the streets. The gay buntings of victory, hung in joy and jubilation over the surrender of Lee's armies a week before, were torn down and every piece of crêpe or black cloth that could be bought at stores or ransacked from attics was hung with unlooped flags on buildings and homes. Even the places of the poor sought to give some outward semblance of their appalling grief—a dark cloth or a bouquet of wild flowers.

Throughout the North the harried temper of the people, many imbued with revenge, would permit no imputation nor insult to the dead. Toleration of Copperhead sentiments was at an end. A man in New

York, of Southern sympathy, was heard to remark, "It served Old Abe right." With difficulty he was saved from being lynched. Senator James W. Grimes of Burlington, Iowa, was "kept busy trying to prevent the destruction of the store of a foolish woman who expressed her joy at Lincoln's murder." The mayor of Lincoln's home town had to ride horseback with a rush into a crowd to rescue a young clerk who had made a taunting remark; an exultant French workman at Alton, where Lincoln and Douglas had held their last debate, was struck down with an iron bar and borne away on a litter. The people were stirred with anger; prostrated with grief.

Sunday was Easter. Ministers could not wait until Wednesday to preach a sermon on Lincoln's death. Neither could communicants remain away. A heavy-laden sorrow depressed them. They sought the consolations of religion. Men who had seldom before entered a church were there that day,—all pews were filled. Library shelves today are replete with pulpit utterances made on that mournful Sabbath.

Henry Ward Beecher was absent from his New York pulpit on that Sunday. He was at Fort Sumter delivering an address at a flag-raising where the first capitulation of the war had occurred. A week later he delivered a sermon, the closing words of which have become a classic in the books of modern oratory:

"Four years ago, oh, Illinois, we took from your midst an untried man, and from among your people. We return him to you a mighty conqueror. Not thine any more, but the Nation's; not ours but the world's. Give him peace, oh, ye prairies! In the midst of this great continent his dust shall rest, a sacred treasure to

myriads who shall pilgrim to that shrine to kindle anew their zeal and patriotism. Ye winds that move over the mighty places of the West, chant his requiem! Ye people, behold a martyr whose blood, as so many articulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty!"

Even in advance of the announced plan for the burial of Mr. Lincoln at Springfield, arrangements were being made by his townsmen. The city council met on Monday, April 17, and appropriated $20,000 to defray the expenses of the funeral. Artists were set at work decorating the State House without and the halls of the House of Representatives within, where Mr. Lincoln had so often appeared. Soon the whole town was swathed in somber "droops."

On the same Monday members of Congress, present in Washington, met to discuss plans. Some urged that he should be buried in the vault built for George Washington under the national Capitol dome; Mrs. Lincoln favored New York or Chicago, but Governor Richard L. Oglesby and the senators from Illinois were insistent on the burial being at Springfield, and finally after days of delay Mrs. Lincoln agreed to this plan.

Tuesday the White House gates were opened and the first crowds, conspicuous by the large number of negroes, were admitted. All day long people surged through the East Room, and at night when the line was stopped thousands were still awaiting admission.

Official services were held there Wednesday noon. Attendance by President Andrew Johnson, cabinet officers, judges, diplomats, congressmen, governors, representatives of cities, church dignitaries; by Grant, Farragut, and many men in uniform, made the occasion impressively solemn. The Rev. Dr. Hall of the

Protestant Episcopal Church offered a prayer, and the Rev. Dr. P. D. Gurley of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, the pastor of the President and his family, delivered the sermon.

Robert T. Lincoln was the only member of the family present. Mrs. Lincoln was so unnerved that she could not endure the scene, and little, sad-eyed Tad could not be induced to come.

All over the nation and in Canadian provinces at the same hour bells were tolling and commemorative exercises were being held in churches of all creeds and denominations. It is estimated that 25,000,000 people attended church that day. The record attendance of "Black Easter" three days before had been broken.

At 2 o'clock the booming of cannon announced that the official service was ended. Soon the hearse, drawn by six white horses, appeared; the coffin was mounted on an elevated catafalque; and the cavalcade, under civilian escort, started for the Capitol. At the east entrance the body was borne across the portico, from which six weeks before the President had delivered his Second Inaugural—"with malice toward none; with charity for all,"—and placed in the rotunda. Soldiers took their places and the scene was quiet for the night.

Thursday was a day for the public. The crowds which on Tuesday seemed so endless at the White House were now multiplied. Thousands came in the heavy downpour of rain for one last look—some were soldiers from hospitals; some were lame; all were sad—a winding line of twenty-five thousand persons.

At early dawn on Friday, General Grant, members of the cabinet, officials of the Illinois delegation and a few others gathered in the rotunda, closed down the

lid and the journey was begun—to Springfield with the body; to mythland with his reputation. For if any one event has beclouded the real Lincoln it was the saintly public adulation which was to follow; they placed a halo about him, making of a great man a deity. It became a tragic pageant that haunted the memories of people for the next half century.

There was a large gathering at the Baltimore and Ohio depot. The coffin of Willie Lincoln, the son, who had died at Washington in February, 1862, was placed on the train beside the President's. Two regiments of colored soldiers standing guard sobbed audibly as the funeral cars started away, moving slowly, without the ringing of a bell, on the trip to Baltimore.

The special train consisted of nine cars, including the funeral coach and the one occupied by the guard of honor. All were draped. A pilot engine preceded during the entire journey. Men eminent in government and affairs joined the train for brief periods; but three old friends who had come with him to Washington made the entire return—Judge David Davis, General David Hunter and Marshal Ward Hill Lamon.

To relieve the apprehension of anxious watchers, the train schedule had been published, with the result that people lined the tracks to see it pass, making a continuous mute demonstration of sorrow undreamed before and unequaled since. Day and night, in sun and rain, whole families were out—silent groups; some on knees praying; women singing dirges; others holding banners aloft expressing sentiments of martyrdom.

Although hundreds of cities sought the honor of seeing the martyr Lincoln, the route followed was the same over which Mr. Lincoln had come to Washington

for his inauguration, except that Pittsburgh and Cincinnati were omitted and the train detoured to Chicago from Indianapolis instead of going direct to Springfield. Most of the traveling was done at night. Stops were made at Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis, Chicago and Springfield.

Baltimore's repentance was not expected. Upon the arrival of the train at the Camden Street station, the remains were taken to the rotunda of the Exchange Building. Ten thousand people passed the casket in three hours. Harrisburg was reached that evening in a drenching rain. A citizen's parade had to be abandoned. But fifteen hundred soldiers accompanied the body to the House of Representatives in the Capitol. All through the night and until 10 o'clock on Saturday morning the tramp of feet echoed a music for his rest.

Gatherings at the villages were growing larger. It seemed that entire populations were out. Wild flowers thrown upon the tracks by school children made the rails so slippery that at times the train nearly stalled. Passing Lancaster, Pennsylvania, personal friends among the guard of honor recognized Thaddeus Stevens, a critic of the administration, standing with uncovered head on one of the tunnels, "absorbed in silent meditation, unconscious that he was observed."

At Philadelphia, where the body was to rest over Sunday, the 22nd, in Independence Hall, unbroken columns of people banked the railroad track—a million were on the streets.

Amid tolling bells and the roaring of cannon on the outskirts, the body was conveyed in a parade of eleven divisions to the "Cradle of Liberty," the head of the

casket being brought to rest near the old Liberty bell. The historic hall had been decorated with festoons, its columns entwined with garlands of black. From their canvas places on the walls, the stern, unflinching eyes of patriots looked down upon the scenes of distress. Until the body was removed on Monday it is said that 300,000 people viewed it. It required five hours of waiting to reach the bier. It was in this Temple to Freedom, visited by Mr. Lincoln on his way to Washington,[1] that he had almost prophesied his own martyrdom:

"My friends, can this country be saved on the basis that all men have an equal chance? If it can I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world, if I can help to save it. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say, I would rather be assassinated upon this spot than surrender it."

His body was conveyed to New York on Monday, and the city seemed torn with grief. The casket was carried to the City Hall in a dismantled temple of liberty, inset with thirty-six stars representing the union of states, and from its sides dangled waving plumes. Women climbed to the roofs of houses to view the long procession; boys clung to trees; the office windows were black with people. A half million, including General Winfield Scott, the first Union commander, paid tribute to their chief. Here the cortège paused for thirty-six hours. Officials could not comprehend the multitudes, could not understand the deepening pall in the demonstrations of affection.

Albany was reached Wednesday evening where the

[1] Blaine, James G., *Twenty Years of Congress*, Vol. II, pp. 15-17.

body lay in state in the assembly chamber until the afternoon of the following day. Buffalo was visited on Thursday evening.

"I had charge of the train in my official capacity as Secretary of State after it left Albany," wrote Chauncey M. Depew,[1] later Senator from New York, fifty-five years later. "It was late in the evening when we started, and the train was running all night through central and western New York. Its schedule was well known along the route. Wherever the highway crossed the railroad track the whole population of the neighborhood was assembled on the highway and in the fields. Huge bonfires lighted up the scene. Pastors of the local churches of all denominations had united in leading their congregations for greeting and farewell to their beloved President. As we would reach a crossing there sometimes would be hundreds and at others thousands of men, women and children on their knees, praying and singing hymns. The continuous service of prayer and song and supplication lasted over the three hundred miles between Albany and Buffalo, from midnight until dawn."

A rivalry between cities had begun to appear. Cleveland erected a temple of nature in a park and placed the coffin under a ceiling studded with silver stars. A monster parade with floats and costumed delegations led the way to the meeting-place, where in spite of a heavy, incessant rain, eight people per minute marched by the casket all day Friday, the 28th. Columbus built a Chinese pagoda for a hearse that traveled over a carpet of roses to the capitol. Time for prepara-

[1] Depew, *My Memories of Eighty Years*, pp. 65-66.

tion now made the public receptions more gorgeous; the floral offerings were beguiling.

Approaching Indianapolis Sunday morning, April 30th, the tracks were spanned with flower arches. Tableaus depicting scenes from his life were enacted in the fields. The state house had been transformed into a tabernacle of splendor with canopies and portraits—a display which correspondents called "faultless." Governor Bramlette of Kentucky, Mr. Lincoln's birth state, was present with a delegation to help Indiana pay respect. More and more people were passing the corpse.

That night the train left for Chicago, reaching there before noon Monday. Now the crowds that came were different; there was a touch of intimate pity in the manifestations of affectionate regard. Thousands had known him, more had heard him; a feeling of close friendship for the dead abounded. The remains were transferred to the rotunda of the court house where for two days it was almost impossible to hold the people in line. It was a great outpouring of friends—a picture of policemen with black gloves; children with black ribbons in their hair; the wheels of the vehicles in parade looped with crêpe; banners and streamers of mourning everywhere, and one hundred and twenty-five thousand people crowding and pushing in the column. Women who had waited for hours shook their babies to wakefulness that they might gaze on the corpse. The frenzy for souvenirs made it necessary to threaten with bayonets those bent on stripping the hearse of its draperies. It was a hectic, feverish gathering. Newspapermen were worn out attempting to record the panorama of woe.

Tuesday night the homeward journey to Springfield was begun, over a route Mr. Lincoln had so often gone. Bonfires were blazing at Lockport, revealing in the yellow light an immense motto, "Come Home"; at Joliet, twelve thousand people were at the depot and the cortège was greeted with minute guns and the tolling of bells; at Dwight, the entire population appeared en masse; a large arch near the depot at Bloomington bore the inscription, "Go thy way to Rest;" at Lincoln, named for him while still a lawyer, women dressed in white sang a dirge as the train passed under a semicircle which carried the words, "With malice toward none, with charity for all;" at Williamsville was a span, "He Has Fulfilled His Mission."

Then Springfield, Wednesday, May 3, at 9 a. m.—a city of black; crowds so large that there was little standing room; there was no place to sleep that night. The roads to town were choked with vehicles; Lincoln's law office, the sign still creaking in the breeze, was muffled in crêpe; his home was a blur of moving drapes.

They carried him back to the Old Hall in the House of Representatives where he had said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand," and there his own came to see him. There were sobs; there were tears; on the outskirts of the crowd there were reminiscences.[1]

"Last time I saw him he was over at Petersburg in a lawsuit," said one.

"I heard him at Beardstown when he cleared Duff Armstrong," came the response.

Memories blended with grief for a day and a night. Still Springfield after eighteen days of waiting was

[1] Octavia Roberts, *Lincoln in Illinois*, pp. 111-118; Rankin, *Intimate Sketches*, p. 320.

disappointed. While the train was speeding westward a tract of high ground near the center of the city was purchased for a temporary tomb. Mrs. Lincoln would not allow him to be buried there; he must be taken to Oak Ridge cemetery, where his neighbors rested, to be placed in a receiving vault, until a monument might be built. The committee tried to argue with her but without success. The place selected by Springfield for the tomb of Abraham Lincoln later became the site of the present Capitol building.

"Peace, Troubled Soul," sang the choir as they carried him to the hearse.

The column led by General Joseph Hooker moved slowly to the cemetery. There were delegations of state; representatives from Congress and groups of Illinois officials. The line moved between solid walls of human faces.

"Bob," the horse Mr. Lincoln drove on the circuit, wearing a black blanket, and riderless, passed in charge of two grooms.

Then the neighbors—afoot, in buggies, a crawling procession. Away down the line the martial music had grown fainter. They were at the cemetery. It was as hot as mid-summer, and the people sought the scanty shade above the scene. There was a prayer, a funeral oration by Bishop Simpson; the choir sang the doxology. The green valley was black with watchers. They shuddered as the casket went back into the crypt. Nothing more was to be done. The distinguished and the humble had buried their hero.

The services over, those on the hillsides hurried away. Soon trails of carriages traveling in clouds of dust stretched afar over the prairies. A stricken little

woman with her two sons turned away from the entrance of the red brick receiving crypt, leaving their dead to the mercy of God. Two guards in blue took their stations at the door. As the shadows fell, thirty-six guns boomed a soldier's requiem. Over the hills the reverberating sound announced that Abraham Lincoln had gone to rest eternal.

CHAPTER XXV

A NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN MONUMENT

THE steps of the long, cement stairs which lead from the valley to the Lincoln monument on the eminence are grooved by the grinding footfalls of the thousands. That impression was uppermost as I climbed the acclivity.

To avoid the crowds that come in automobiles near mid-day, I had arisen early and taken a street car to Oak Ridge Cemetery. It was a fifteen minutes' ride from the Sangamon Court House Square in Springfield. Instinctively, it seemed, the conductor sensed where I was going.

"A few years ago everyone who visited the Lincoln tomb went by street car," he commented. "Now they go by automobile."

Arriving at the arched entrance, he pointed in the direction of the hill, and then his car rattled and banged away as it ascended the other ridge of the valley and was soon out of sight.

At the foot of the incline I stood a few minutes before the receiving vault where Abraham Lincoln's body rested until December 21, 1865, then to be taken to a temporary vault where it remained until removed to the crypt of the monument, September 19, 1871. Slowly I began the climb.

It was a sharp invigorating morning of early spring. The frost crystals glistened on the branches, and swallows were stirring in the dried leaves or twittering in

sheltered places on the side of the ravine. The world was lifting its bowed head from the long bereavement of winter.

Suddenly the monument came into full view, with the sun bathing its obelisk with a golden light that seemed to radiate a benediction. Every element of nature appeared to be blended to stir the imagination and touch with awe the solemn nature of the visit.

Before entering the tomb, I walked about to view the huge memorial from every angle. The monument, of grayish Quincy granite, nearly 135 feet to the pinnacle, sits in a nine-acre plot. The base would occupy two ordinary city lots. On the north and south sides are semi-circular additions on a twelve-foot radius, which serve as a vestibule to the catacomb on the north and as a memorial hall on the south side. Stone steps lead to the terrace top, sixteen feet above the base foundation, from which rises the obelisk surrounded by four pedestals. Upon these rest bronze groups, emblematic of the fours arms of the service—Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery and Navy. On the south side of the shaft, standing on a seven-foot base, ornamented by the coat of arms of the United States as representing the Federal Constitution, is a statue of Lincoln.

The pose is characteristic of the last year of his life. The face shows the lines of care and worry. The uplifted hand in gesture, the poise of the head and the erect position of the body were suggested probably by his attitude, when delivering six weeks before his death, those charitable words of his Second Inaugural:

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right,

let us strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

It was the sculptor's conception that this monument should be symbolic of the idea that President Lincoln took his stand on the Constitution, when calling the four arms of the service to hold together the Union. The shield of each state has been blazoned along the buttresses below the military groups.

Finding the north entrance, which I had approached from the valley, still locked, I passed around the base. The memorial hall on the opposite side was open, and Mr. H. W. Fay, the custodian, was busy with his morning's mail. Soon we were engaged in one of the most absorbing of conversations. When I learned that he had been a former editor at De Kalb, Illinois, I used my newspaper experience as a ground for discussion. But Mr. Fay is so seeped in Lincoln lore that one who attempts to talk any other topic must soon capitulate.

"Within a month after the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, the National Lincoln Monument Association was formed for the purpose of raising funds to erect a memorial to Mr. Lincoln in Springfield," Mr. Fay told me. "This dated from May 11, 1865. Nine years later the dedication was held here, attended by upwards of thirty thousand people.

"A large amount of the money came in voluntarily, and a disproportionate share was contributed by the colored people. About $8,000 was received from the colored soldiers of the United States Army."

"Who was the first contributor?" I interrupted, taking out my note-book.

"The first entry, made May 8, 1865, by the treasurer of the association, was a contribution of $100 from Isaac Reed of New York; but Mr. John C. Powers, the first custodian, always claimed that the first contribution actually was made by an aged colored woman of Marietta, Ohio. Charlotte Scolle had obtained her freedom in Virginia by the Emancipation Proclamation, and had moved to Marietta. When she heard that Lincoln was dead, she declared he was the best friend of the colored people on earth and that she would donate five dollars of her wages towards a monument for him. She gave the money at once to a minister, who sent it in after the movement to raise the funds had started, but Mr. Powers always considered her contribution as the first."

Mr. Fay further explained that the children of the nation did much to erect the monument. Of the 5,145 entries, 1,697 were from Sunday schools. Contributions were received from lodges, army associations, and individuals. Four states made appropriations: Illinois, $50,000; New York, $10,000; Missouri, $1,000; and Nevada, $500. The monument was dedicated, October 15, 1874, but was not turned over to the state until July 9, 1895. Since then no charge has been made for admission.

Conversation about Lincoln was drifting to a discussion of the thousands of books and pamphlets written about him. Mr. Fay was showing me "a mile of pictures" and other precious records. More than 30,000 items about Lincoln have been gathered in the mem-

LINCOLN MONUMENT AT SPRINGFIELD

orial hall. Suddenly came a question that shocked my sensibilities.

"Did you ever know that an attempt was made to steal Lincoln's body?"

"Steal his body!" I exclaimed. "I never heard of it. When did that occur?"

For years I had read conventional biographies about Lincoln, but I had never learned of that ghoulish act.

"Most people who come here are a little astonished, when told of it," continued Mr. Fay. "It was in the fall of 1876. Three fellows meeting in Chicago conceived the idea that if they stole the body they could secure the release of a pal serving a term in prison and receive a ransom besides.

"It was the night of the election, November 7, 1876. The attention of the public was distracted. They broke into the vault and were in the act of prying the lid off the coffin, when they were scared away by the footsteps of approaching officials who had obtained knowledge of the contemplated desecration."

"Were they caught and punished?" The story was so gripping, so terrible to imagine, that I could scarcely await the finish.

"Two of them were caught later, convicted and sentenced to a year at Joliet penitentiary. That was then the maximum penalty for such an offense. Now it would be ten years."

With the relaxation of my intense interest, Mr. Fay explained that such a thing could never happen again. Together we went to the crypt in the north entrance.

"Mr. Lincoln's body does not rest in that white marble sarcophagus," he explained, pointing to the large stone coffin with the name "Lincoln" in the center of

the wreath wrought in the marble. "His casket is embedded in ten feet of cement below. Before it was placed there, the coffin was opened in the presence of official observers. The body was found well preserved. This precaution was taken to silence forever the fanciful stories that the body had been spirited away. The casket of Mrs. Lincoln, who after a tragic widowhood,[1] died on July 16, 1882, at the old Edwards home where she had first met Lincoln, was placed above his in a crypt back of the sarcophagus. There they will doubtless remain for the ages to come. The wreath on the floor at the right is over Mr. Lincoln's head; the one at the left is at his feet."

In the presence of the dust of this great man, there comes a sense of repose, a soothing effect upon mind and body. The shifting of the light and shade that enter the doorway robs the charnel house of its gloom. An active memory turns back the dark portals of the past, revealing the humble child of the backwoods,—laborer, clerk, surveyor, lawyer, debator, President, emancipator of a race, savior of the Republic. What an eventful life! One cannot pause here long without "feeling the religion of the place steal over him, and seeing something of the dark and gloomy expression pass off from the stern countenance of Death."

Other visitors were now crowding about the doorway of the catacomb and peering in through the iron grating. We returned to the hall. In a spacious register people were inscribing their names. Leafing the pages backward for nearly a year, I found the signatures of sovereigns of foreign lands, princes and potentates, ambassadors, cabinet officers, generals, inventors, world

[1] Barton, W. E., *Women Lincoln Loved*, pp. 338-368.

heroes, and common people by the legion. More than 200,000 come here yearly.

They tell a story in Springfield that a recently naturalized citizen, once a peasant in a certain queen's country and learning that the queen herself would visit the Lincoln tomb, decided to be present to obtain a glimpse of his former ruler. When the official party arrived, he went with it into the memorial hall; and after the queen had registered, took the pen and wrote his name above hers, before other members of the company registered.

"That is a good illustration of democracy breaking the social caste," the narrator philosophized. Afterwards I learned that the facts were substantially correct. Indeed, America is democratic, and no one knows better than the former peasant that it was Lincoln who so preserved it.

Another hour was spent. I still lingered in the hall, inspecting the relics preserved from Lincoln's lifetime. Two children, a boy and a girl of about fifteen years, went before me at the cases. They were accompanied by their grandfather, a little bent-over man wearing an army button. He was vociferous in his approval of many things he saw, and punctuated the emphasis of his words by thumping his cane on the floor.

All went smoothly until the letter exhibit was reached. When those children found the note written by the President-elect to the little twelve-year-old girl, Grace Bedell, of Westfield, New York, and her picture, all progress beyond that exhibition was temporarily blocked, while they read every word Lincoln had written, together with her letter in after years, in ex-

planation. It is a gripping story of a little girl who changed the looks of Lincoln; and was so suggestive of his simplicity that I copied it:

"April 10, 1905.

"Mr. H. W. Fay,
"De Kalb, Ill.
"Dear Sir:

"I am in receipt of your letter of recent date, asking 'an account of the circumstances leading up to Mr. Lincoln's departure from the clean-shaven plan.'

"At that time I was a child of less than twelve years of age and was full of interest in the stirring events of the day. Naturally, my father being a Republican, I was with him a sincere admirer of Mr. Lincoln, listening to the stories of his early life, his struggles to obtain an education and privation which had so beset his youth, and deeply resenting the slur cast upon him as being ugly and uncouth in appearance. Perhaps it had so happened that I had not noticed very particularly the cuts of his face, which were in the papers, for certainly a glance at the high and gaudy poster brought us children by our father was rather disappointing, and quick in my desire to improve him, I suggested in a letter that he would look better if he would let his whiskers grow and asked him to let me know if he would, or if he had no time to reply, to let his little girl do so for him. I promised him I would do my best to win over two brothers, who were Democrats, to cast their votes for him, and to soften the blow somewhat I told him I thought the rail fence around his picture looked real pretty. Because of the ridicule which overwhelmed me, I remember another circumstance. I confided to an elder sister that I had

written to Mr. Lincoln, and she questioned whether I had addressed him properly. I said I knew *I had,* and re-wrote the address 'Honorable Abraham Lincoln, Esquire!'—but my mother comforted me by saying in the midst of the laughter that the postmaster would be in no doubt for whom the letter was intended, and this is the reply I received in a few days, a kindly, simple letter from a great-hearted man to a child."

" 'Springfield, Ill.,
" 'Oct. 19, 1860.

" 'Miss Grace Bedell,
" 'My dear little Miss:

" 'Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received.

" 'I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine and one seven years of age. They with their mother constitute my whole family.

" 'As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin it now?

" 'Your very sincere well wisher,
" 'A. Lincoln.'

"When he made the journey to Washington before the inauguration, he recalled the circumstances when the train stopped at our town, and called for his little correspondent, giving her name and the purport of her letter to himself. I was helped forward, and Mr. Lincoln stepped to the platform beside the track, shook my hand and kissed me, saying as he touched his face: 'You see, I let these whiskers grow for you, Grace!' I was so overcome with confusion that I remember little else excepting the twinkle which came into the sad eyes

as he held my hand, and the cheer of the assembled crowd.

"Very truly, Mrs. Grace Bedell Billings."

Miss Grace Bedell lived with her parents in Westfield, Chautauqua county, New York, when she wrote to Lincoln. After Lincoln's reply became public following his death, Mr. H. W. Fay, then a newspaper editor in De Kalb, Illinois, wrote her for a further explanation. She responded from Delphos, Kansas, where in 1928 I found her living. As the present custodian of the Lincoln tomb at Springfield, Mr. Fay has deposited there her letter of explanation which contains an exact transcript of Mr. Lincoln's letter, with a photographic copy of the original she received.

There are many other things of surpassing appeal—sculpture, paintings, pictures, flags and badges—all touched by the wand of history. Here are the surveying instruments, the compass and chain, which he used as a young man in Sangamon county; there the table and rocker from his Springfield law office, and other mementoes including two chairs from his home. One of the collections in the tomb shows the pictures of the men to whom Lincoln wrote or mentioned in his speeches. It makes a pile the height of fifty Webster Dictionaries. Another collection is a record of where Lincoln was for some two thousand days, and it verifies many of the stories about Lincoln.

In one corner is a stone sent to him by the liberty-loving people of Rome after his second election. It was taken from the Roman wall of Servius Tullius, a believer in justice, where it had rested for over two thousand years. On its face was engraved in Latin an inscription, which translated reads:

TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN, PRESIDENT FOR THE SECOND TIME OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC, CITIZENS OF ROME PRESENT THIS STONE, FROM THE WALL OF SERVIUS TULLIUS, BY WHICH THE MEMORY OF EACH OF THESE ASSERTORS OF LIBERTY MAY BE ASSOCIATED. 1865.

"There are many other things to see," remarked Mr. Fay, who then presented me with a booklet describing the tomb. To the flyleaf he had attached an oak leaf from a tree that shades a part of the Lincoln plot.

"Look in this case," he said, and I peered through the glass at a piece of white silk, bearing a design of red flowers, and saw that the cloth was discolored.

"It is a stained cloth. What is it?" I asked.

"It's stained—stained with the blood of Lincoln. That silk is from the gown worn by the actress, Miss Laura Keene, who played the leading role in *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre on the night of Lincoln's assassination. When the shot rang out and Miss Keene saw the murderer leap from the President's box, she rushed to him and held his wounded, bleeding head upon her knees. One year later she came to Springfield with the stained garment and presented it to the Memorial Association."

What a picture it summons! Shadows of four years of warfare! The story of the awful tragedy at the close revealed in a single touch! It is the hush of martyrdom enshrined.

Outside, the gusty breezes of a spring noonday were playing about the tomb. An automobile party was coming down the road. After ambling down the pathway a short distance, I looked back. The scene of that shaft shimmering in the sun is unforgettable. No longer did it appear merely as a monument of stone;

it was a temple of revered associations expressing the aspirations, the hopes of the millions.

From it, in the decades to come, the many who visit there will see a reflection of the spirit of Abraham Lincoln. Through them, the stimulating influence of his life will pass to the generations to come, until its widening purposes will become a heritage for the world.

THE END

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